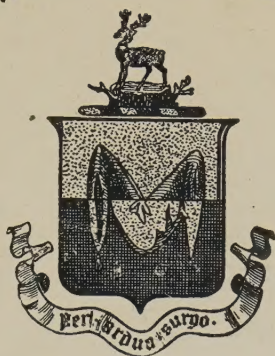




Whitman College Library



Whitman

Presented by \_\_\_\_\_

Shelf E 169.1.M98

No. 69313

22-6396







THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN IDEALISM



# THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN IDEALISM

BY

GUSTAVUS MYERS

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT AMERICAN FORTUNES," "HISTORY  
OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES," "HISTORY OF TAMMANY  
HALL," "YE OLDEN BLUE LAWS," ETC.



NEW YORK

BONI AND LIVERIGHT

1925

*Copyright, 1925, by*  
BONI & LIVERIGHT, INC.

---

*Printed in the United States of America*

E

169

.1

.m98



To  
OTTO H. KAHN

WHO HAS SO CLEARLY DISCERNED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE  
TO BE A NATION OF IDEALISTS AND WHO HAS SO CON-  
SISTENTLY EXPRESSED HIS RECOGNITION OF THE FACT.

69313



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2024

## PREFACE

ONE of the most remarkable manifestations of recent years has been the increase of declarations that the American people are a nation of idealists. Were such assertions wholly the product of Americans they might be regarded as the emanations of exhorters for their own country. But they have come with even greater force from many sophisticated foreign observers. That America is a mighty country may, perchance, account for some of the assiduous care with which these foreign personages cultivate American sentiment. But so many of their remarks have been informal, offhand and seemingly spontaneous that the matter of sincerity is little open to doubt. Even if their comments were calculated, the very fact that they might think the description of Americans as idealistic would please Americans is of itself significant as indicating what they believe the keynote of the national characteristic to be.

With opinions, however, we are not concerned. The question uppermost is a dual one: Is America idealistic, and if so, in what respects has this idealism manifested itself? Even such Americans as have affirmed their country to be swayed by idealism, have contented themselves with the iteration of the general statement. With them, we may say, the knowledge is intuitive and convincing, but this is by no means the same as explaining in what this idealism has consisted. As long as this is so—as long as the mere assertion is made without the facts adduced to sustain it—the subject necessarily remains an airy, intangible one.

Yet if there is any subject that deserves a place as a powerful reality it is that of American idealism. It is the fact of facts; it is the narrative of ideas which, beginning in the intellectual and moral realms, have embodied themselves as forces sweeping the world, changing the destiny of many nations, overthrowing

old orders, upraising peoples and sending forth irrepressible principles that have inspired all humanity.

With the presentation of the facts American idealism ceases to be a vague quantity. It becomes a definite actuality, and as such is invested with all the qualities of a new and impressive kind of history.

Restricting itself as this book does to essential facts, all theory and every byway of theory are avoided. The facts reveal much more than even the most ardent American believers in national idealism have thought. They show that from the very start American idealism has demonstrated itself in a consecutive series of achievements, all fraught with far-reaching and salutary consequences to America itself and to the human race in general.

With such an idealism so rooted in the national character, so fixed as an impetus, it may be likely to pause but not to halt in its progress toward the eradication of other evils and its proclamation of new principles. The fact that America is idealistic is perhaps the surest safeguard against its being afflicted with that inordinate conceit which has brought about the stagnation, then deterioration of many a selfish nation.

A final word in requesting indulgence for this suggestion: Were I a writer addicted to fulsome representations, there might be a tendency in some quarters to view this as a work presenting the most attractive facts only. But many of the books I have hitherto written have been along lines showing the evils imposed upon American life by organizations, groups and particular classes. This being so, it cannot be contended that in preparing the present book I have seen one side only and that aspect the most favorable. In contradistinction to my other books, this history deals with the currents and accomplishments of the American people as a whole.

GUSTAVUS MYERS.

New York City, January, 1925.



# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	vii
I. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY . . . . .	13
II. MONARCHY CHALLENGED . . . . .	31
III. MONARCHY EXTINGUISHED . . . . .	42
IV. ARISTOCRACY INTRENCHED . . . . .	54
V. ARISTOCRACY OVERTHROWN . . . . .	64
VI. FIRST BLOWS AT MONOPOLY OF LEARNING . . . . .	84
VII. CLASS GRIP UPON EDUCATION BROKEN . . . . .	92
VIII. CULTURE A NATION'S GOAL . . . . .	106
IX. SLAVERY ENGRAFTED . . . . .	125
X. SLAVERY UPROOTED . . . . .	139
XI. HOSTILITY TO SERVILE ART . . . . .	156
XII. ART CASTS OFF PATRONAGE . . . . .	170
XIII. MOVEMENT FOR AN AMERICAN ART . . . . .	187
XIV. THE ARTS SWERVE TO DEMOCRACY . . . . .	199
XV. LIBERTY FOR OTHER LANDS . . . . .	221
XVI. CREATING SELF-GOVERNING PEOPLES . . . . .	240
XVII. AUTOCRACY CHALLENGES DEMOCRACY . . . . .	250
XVIII. STRENGTHENING OF MORAL FORCES . . . . .	270
XIX. COMPACT TO SUPPRESS WAR . . . . .	293
XX. ROADS TO A RÉGIME OF PEACE . . . . .	312
XXI. CURBING PLUTOCRACY . . . . .	328
EPILOGUE . . . . .	347



# THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN IDEALISM





## CHAPTER I

### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

CONQUERING the wilderness was the least difficult of the American people's first tasks. That problem was effectively solved once forests were replaced by farms and villages and cities. But to get rid of Old World formulas was a much longer, more arduous undertaking. To this fresh new continent was transplanted the yoke of ancient ideas which had long been used to hold peoples in spiritual, mental and legal bondage. Some of these ideas were expressed in laws; others, even more pernicious, were stamped in tradition, custom and accepted thought.

It was in grappling with these ideas and supplanting them with their own that the American people had their hardest struggle. Long after forests had been cleared, these old ideas persisted, grim encumbrances of a past saturated with oppression. They strove to dominate the thought, wither the spirit and paralyze the life of the youthful nation. Although, because of the pressure of Old World influences, many of these ideas retained their sway for varying periods, they were, one after another, overthrown and a new order substituted.

The first great accomplishment of the American people was the enduring establishment of something never before known in the world's history. It was Religious Liberty, the inviolate right of every individual to worship as he believed, or if he so pleased, not to worship at all.

A strikingly original, distinctive contribution this was to human progress. Perhaps to those who now inherit this liberty as a guaranteed right its introduction may not seem to have been so notable. But it was a remarkable innovation, a radical de-

parture from the long accustomed mode of regulation and discrimination. It put the declaration in basic law that here at last was a land where the State had no power to interfere in religious matters and where people of all faiths could live together, equally protected in the exercise of their beliefs.

There were countries, both ancient and modern, tolerating different religions. At best toleration is simply a precarious condescension. During early imperial eras Rome, with the pagan mythology as the official State religion, prided itself upon its toleration of other religions. Yet this toleration was quickly withdrawn when the adherents of Christianity began to increase and spread their faith. Charging that they taught doctrines subversive of the regular order of gods and State, rulers and ruling classes caused successive hideous persecutions of Christians. Except for a brief interval during the reign of the Emperor Constantine, three centuries after the advent of Christianity, the doctrine continued dominant that the State should have an established religion to be supported and upheld by both law and force.

In mediæval and later periods in Europe all countries had their established religion. From this union of Church and State, with its trail of rival claims and theological disputes, ensued repetitions of ghastly persecutions and a devastation of wars breaking out intermittently from the fifth to the nineteenth century.

For a time other religions or sects might be tolerated, yet there was no assurance that at any moment their believers would not be harassed, converted by force, imprisoned, tortured, exiled or put to death. In various countries Jews, after being tolerated, were massacred or driven out. Protestants were slaughtered in France, then legally tolerated for nearly a century, and then forced to leave by the revocation in 1685 of the Edict of Nantes. The particular religion bulwarked in power condemned other faiths or even a dissenting from the established creed as

heresy. To root out this and maintain what it termed the purity of real religion, the commanding power of the State was used. Not until 1689 was the Toleration Act of England passed, and this law allowed just what the title implied and nothing more. The Church of England remained buttressed, the established church, supported by revenues taxed from the whole people and with its prelates armed with political as well as invested with religious power. And even though the law decreed toleration, the exercise of it was of slow growth, adherents of nearly all sects looking upon toleration as a grievous evil tending to undermine ardor and corrupt faith.

When, therefore, groups of adventurous spirits left Europe to settle in America they broke away from the Old World in person but not wholly in mind. Many ways of viewing things and the general atmosphere to which they had been accustomed came with them. They left Europe as rebels but only in the sense of their refusal to submit to the conformity required by intrenched creeds. Almost all of these groups planted in America imitations of the orthodox scheme prevailing in Europe. The Quakers in Pennsylvania were an exception. They came with some independently broad religious ideas which, however, were later set aside by royal order.

In some of the colonies theocracies, or governments based upon Scriptural interpretation, were set up; in others ecclesiastical hierarchies. Church and State were fused into a unit, and in many parts of the country ministers were supreme in civil as well as religious functions. The creed of the dominating church was the ruling faith; for a considerable time none other was tolerated.

It has long been the historical fashion to attribute to the Puritans of Massachusetts the introduction of summary intolerant laws. This is an error. It was the Episcopal Church, called the Church of England, which in Virginia first did this.

As early as 1623 the Virginia General Assembly enacted a series of these statutes. One Virginia law—repeated in 1632 and in 1642—compelled uniformity to the doctrines, canons and discipline of the Church of England. Another Virginia law of 1623 fined anyone absenting himself, without good reason, from church service; this was followed by a law passed in 1629 ordering military commanders to see to it that all persons did go to church on the Sabbath and prohibiting working at employments or journeying on that day. Still another Virginia church-attendance law was passed in 1632. The conception of these and other laws was no more original to America than were laws against witchcraft imputed as peculiar to Massachusetts. Witchcraft laws were imported ideas, patterned after musty old European laws against conjuration, witchcraft and dealing with wicked spirits. As late as 1712, South Carolina, in adopting bodily a code of English statutes, included one of these antique witchcraft laws of the reign of James I.

In almost all of the colonies drastic laws against followers of different beliefs were enacted at one time or another and often continuously. Virginia disqualified Catholics from holding any office, civil or other, and prohibited them from remaining in the colony more than five days. It passed repressive laws against Quakers. With heavy disqualifying penalties it proscribed any Christian questioning or disputing any part of the established creed, stigmatizing him as an atheist. A Massachusetts law of 1647 excluded all Catholic priests and missionaries. Successive laws, beginning in 1656, were passed in Massachusetts against Quakers as stirrers of mutiny, sedition and rebellion, whose actions tended to undermine civil authority and destroy established forms of worship. Although Quakers were later tolerated in Massachusetts they were disfranchised. Long and bitterly did the Puritan theocracy persecute Anabaptists and other sects. The Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony also enacted



repressive laws, mild, however, compared to those of the Puritans. When the two colonies consolidated there were adopted harsh laws against Catholic priests. Until the eighteenth century Episcopalians were forbidden to establish their churches in Massachusetts, and it was not until 1755 that the law there permitted wardens of the Episcopal Church to accept grants or donations.

The Connecticut theocracy's laws against Quakers, Catholics, and all other sects independent of the established Congregational Church, were modeled much on the lines of the Puritan. After 1708 Episcopalians were allowed in Connecticut, but were barred from voting at elections until 1752 when they obtained that privilege in certain towns.

The disqualifying of those not members of the ruling church was a European idea. Laws in England long forbade all not subscribing to the doctrines of the Church of England from studying at universities, occupying pulpits or entering Parliament.

The motive behind persecution was not persecution for its own sake but a set belief that uniformity of creed was a paramount need, and that joined as government was with church, any measure was justifiable to enforce that uniformity. When now we survey America with its variety of sects and religions and the machinery of society moving smoothly, it is hard to realize that three centuries ago religious dissent was held to be synonymous with civil disorder. Yet this was the doctrine promulgated in Europe at the behest of kings and prelates, and it had abundant plausible advocates. In their persecutions, Puritans and other sects were actuated by political as well as religious reasons.

It was for his assault upon the dogma, then thought impregnable, that Church and State did not have to be combined and his declarations that the aims and functions of civil govern-

ment were totally distinct from those of church, that the Puritans banished Roger Williams. He it was who first preached those new ideas, considered very startling in his period, which in the end prevailed as the foundation for the American institution of religious liberty. He put those ideas in effect in settling Rhode Island, but they were ideas much in advance of his times, and their spread was also retarded by proscriptive measures designed to keep the old order intact.

In settling Pennsylvania, William Penn aimed to carry out tolerant ideas. His Frame of Government of 1682, repeated in the Charter of Privileges in 1701, did not provide complete toleration inasmuch as it allowed full liberty only to those believing in God. Yet such a large degree of freedom as it did grant was a most unusual concession for his era. Orders, however, came from the English sovereigns, William and Mary, for the enactment of an oath law the effect of which was to exclude Catholics, Unitarians and Jews from holding office. This law enacted under Queen Anne in 1705, when Penn was absent on a visit to England, was kept in the Pennsylvania statutes until the Revolution.

To resurrect from those times a tolerably clear picture of the acrimonious sectarian contests raging and the arising recriminations, it is only necessary to reproduce the wording of a Maryland law passed in 1649. First controlled by Catholics, then by a division of power between Catholics and Protestants, and finally by Protestants, Maryland presented a curious mixture of toleration and persecution. Its act of 1649 ordered fining or whipping or imprisonment or the alternative of the public supplication of forgiveness to "persons reproaching any other within the province by the name or denomination of heretic, schismatic, idolator, puritan, independent, presbyterian, popish priest, jesuited priest, lutheran, calvinist, anabaptist, brownist, antinomian, round-head, separatist, or any other name or term, in

a reproachful manner relating to the matter of religion." For a time, in Maryland, Quakers were persecuted, and for a long period Catholics were deprived of the right to vote. Georgia was liberal. In the Carolinas the bulk of the settlers were not adherents of the Church of England; the authorities, as a matter of policy, had to grant a good measure of toleration.

So long as New York was under Dutch control no interference was permitted by the Dutch West India Company with religious beliefs. After the English conquest of New York a law was enacted, on August 9, 1700, banishing Catholic priests. Quakers secured the right to vote in New Jersey in 1713, and in New York in 1735. Even after Catholics were tolerated in New York they were debarred from voting, a condition lasting until the Revolution. Because of sheer admitted prejudice and without any warrant of law, Jews were declared disqualified from voting. In his "History of New York," Judge William Smith, a contemporary writer, related how in 1737 their claims to citizenship were rejected by means of an extraordinary and artful emotional appeal citing Old World practices and ascribing the crucifixion of Christ to their ancestors. This tirade was indulgently allowed by the court. Judge Smith's account further tells how the declamation so inflamed the attendant crowd against the Jews, that there would have been a massacre then and there had not the lawyers who had inveighed against them restrained the mob.

How much of popular bigotry was spontaneous and how much fomented it is not easy to determine. Certain it is that no small share was instigated or kept in motion by royal governors fawned upon by royal officials and not infrequently encouraged by ministerial cliques. Vivid examples are given in Judge Smith's narrative.

Lord Cornbury, in 1702, succeeded the Earl of Bellomont, as Captain-General and Governor of New York, Massachusetts

Bay and other provinces. "Hunted out of England by a host of hungry creditors, he was bent upon getting as much money as he could squeeze out of the purses of an impoverished people . . . but in his zeal for the church he was surpassed by none." One of his foibles was in seeking diversion by masquerading at night in feminine clothes. At Jamaica, Long Island, where he had his residence and "court," Presbyterians had built a church, and their minister had a parsonage house and glebe. One Sunday, between services, Episcopalians took forcible and fraudulent possession of the church. There was a popular uproar, but according to Judge Smith, Lord Cornbury "abetted the episcopal zealots, and harassed the others by numberless persecutions, heavy fines and long imprisonments through fear of which many who had been active in the dispute fled out of the province." Under pretense of obtaining a loan of the Presbyterian parsonage house at Jamaica for the use of his family, Lord Cornbury "perfidiously delivered it into the hands of the Episcopal party, and encouraged one, Cardwell, the sheriff, a mean fellow who afterward put an end to his life, to seize upon the glebe, which he surveyed into lots and farmed for the benefit of the Episcopal Church."

Having no minister or church in New York City, Presbyterians worshiped in a church placed at their disposal by the Dutch Calvinists. In January, 1707, Francis McKemie and John Hampton, Presbyterian ministers, arrived. Peremptorily, Lord Cornbury forbade services. The Presbyterian ministers defied his command, one preaching at the Presbyterian Church at Newtown, the other in a private house with open doors.

A few days later, on a warrant issued by Cornbury for preaching without his license, they were arrested by Sheriff Cardwell, and dragged before Lord Cornbury. A spirited defense availed them nothing; they were put in jail and kept there for more than six weeks. Their treatment making a great commotion,



the court was induced to release them on a writ of habeas corpus. They then had to give bonds. Upon the ground of lack of evidence the Grand Jury declined to indict Pastor Hampton but it did indict Pastor McKemie and he was tried upon these charges: He had attempted to subvert the Queen of England's ecclesiastical supremacy; "in derogation of the royal authority and prerogative," he had preached without the governor's license; he had used interdicted rites and ceremonies.

The trial excited widespread interest; in many a household the result was anxiously awaited. Using every subtlety and dexterous twist, the presiding Chief Justice sought to bring about McKemie's conviction. It was also believed by Cornbury and his coterie that the picked jury would report a conviction. But the jury gave a verdict of acquittal—a verdict then and later taking on an increasing importance. It was regarded as a deathblow to the contention that England's ecclesiastical laws stretched to the colonies. It was hailed as a triumphant vindication of the growing American idea that Protestants of all denominations should be vested with equal rights. People of vision saw in it the forerunner of the time when the principle would be extended to cover all creeds and religions. Already, old laws notwithstanding, different sects in various colonies had their churches and congregations; there still was discrimination and disfranchising but, except in a few places, no serious interference with the rights of worship.

From Europe, with a lineage going back to remote eras, had come the practice of tithes, or taxing the entire community for the provision of the established church. Had this levying been confined to members of that church, the injustice might not have been so great in a new country where it was not so easy to obtain funds for the propagation of religion. But in addition to its being an ancient mainstay for the support and aggrandizement of the established church, it generally imposed a double

taxation upon adherents of other sects and religions. Besides being taxed for the benefit of the special church in power, they had to tax themselves to provide for their own churches. The Quakers were one sect wholly opposed to the idea of a subsidized ministry.

Virginia, Maryland and the Carolinas taxed every inhabitant for the support of the Episcopal Church. After 1701 Quakers were exempted in Maryland. In New York the Dutch Church was at first the beneficiary of this proscriptive tax system; in some communities it continued so for a time after the English conquest, but by one measure and another the Episcopal Church obtained the advantage. Every resident of Massachusetts and of Connecticut long had to pay taxes for the support of the Congregational Church until 1727 when laws were passed in both colonies permitting taxes collected from Episcopalians to be turned in to the Episcopal minister if there was one within five miles "whose services they did attend." Massachusetts presently gave the same privileges to Baptists, and it exempted Quakers and Anabaptists from payment of church taxes. At about the same time, Connecticut relieved Quakers and Baptists from enforced taxes. During many years New Hampshire laws assessed all taxpayers for church support. Many of these church taxation laws, in one way or another, burdened the people until the Revolution, and in a few instances, until long after.

But the fact that in various places sects and religions proved that they could maintain their own churches had an enormous eventual influence in crystallizing the American idea that churches and ministers should be supported entirely by voluntary contribution. Thus, for example, in Maryland where, in 1678, the majority of the population were Presbyterians, Independent Anabaptists and Quakers, Lord Baltimore reported that their churches were built and kept in good repair by the free and voluntary offerings of their members.

A more immediate influence was the rebellion led in Virginia in 1676 by Nathaniel Bacon, a young planter of affluence. Some of the very abuses leading to that movement were precisely those abolished by the Revolution a century later.

The conduct, privileges and extortions of many of the Church of England clergy in Virginia, Maryland and some other colonies were scandalous. Appointed by the governor, often by order of the Bishop of London, they asserted themselves as an exclusive order. Fidelity to the facts demands a true description. Fox-hunting, gambling, dissipations and immoralities were some of their practices and excesses; in Virginia it had been found necessary to pass admonishing laws. Preaching against the transgressions of the poor, they were careful not to offend the susceptibilities of the rich. Antagonizing the aristocracy brought removal by self-perpetuating vestries. Each minister in Virginia had his assured security of a glebe of 250 acres of land, a parsonage house and often a supply of slaves and cattle. Taxes were oppressive. Ministers and councilors and their families were relieved from all payment of taxes. Ministerial exemption, however, was not confined to Virginia. By successive laws beginning in 1671, Massachusetts exempted ministers, their widows and all church elders from taxation. Connecticut passed a somewhat similar law, and so did some other colonies. Almost everywhere in varying degrees the dominant clergy supervised a long list of popular activities from birth to burial, collecting fees and insisting upon their right to a monopoly.

During the brief supremacy of Bacon's government new laws were passed. One of these continued the exemption of ministers themselves from taxation but made members of their families subject to titheable levies. Another broke the solid power of the vestries by compelling their election every three years. No one ever knew precisely how Bacon, the patriot and



rebel, met his death; likely enough, he and two of his chief lieutenants were assassinated. After the collapse of his movement, all of his laws were at first repealed by the aristocratic and church party. Then, as a concession to popular feeling, they faced about and reënacted some of the less sweeping of those laws, almost copying Bacon's identical words.

The spirit embodied in Bacon's Rebellion lived, arousing an impulse for religious and political independence. In some places it slumbered; it burst forth in others. Captain-General and Governor Fletcher of New York, Massachusetts Bay, etc., demanded of the New York Assembly, in September, 1693, the passage of a law concentrating in him the right to appoint ministers. To his astonishment the Assembly refused, giving instead the right to the church members of each parish to choose their own minister. In an explosive address Fletcher told the members of the Assembly that he would teach them their places. They were unaffected by his threats. He then dissolved the Assembly.

Frequently royal governors were warned that they must not interfere with the working of American ideas. "We are sufficiently assured that your excellency will be as averse from countenancing as we are from brooking, any infringements of our inestimable liberties, civil and religious," said an address of the Mayor and Alderman of New York City, October 7, 1753, to the incoming Governor, Sir Danvers Osborn, who took great but futile offense at the plain-spoken terms.

Two other factors had a large influence in shaping thought. One was that of the Methodist revivalists with their powerful denunciation of "ecclesiastical fooleries." Journeying throughout the colonies, they aimed especially to reach what the aristocracy derided as "the contemptible rabble," which was a designation for nearly all persons not accounted "rich and noble" or well-to-do. Exhorting what were then considered vast audi-

ences they emphasized the spiritual needs of mankind and voluntary good-conduct ("faith shown by works") as distinct from the cant of enforcement of civil law dictated by ecclesiastics. All of the power of ecclesiastical repression, they showed, had not retarded vice and crime. One effect of their preaching was to stimulate the growing American idea that the proper, desirable place for the clergy was exclusively in the domain of spiritual functions, and that they should be divested of all civil authority.

The other influential factor was the press which, in 1735, won its freedom from ecclesiastical censorship and the edicts of royal officials. Newspapers freely criticized laws and officials and discussed religious questions. Pamphlets abounded. "We are credibly informed," said the *Boston Evening Post*, in December, 1742, "that an eminent minister of this town has warned his people against reading of pamphlets and newspapers, wherein are contained religious controversies. This seems a bold stroke and a considerable step (if the advice should be regarded) towards that state of ignorance in which, it seems, some folks would willingly see the body of this people enveloped. The next stroke may probably be at the Liberty of the Press. . . ."

Even before the Revolution many Americans were ripe for the complete separation of Church from State. The Virginia legislature, in 1772, passed an act prohibiting any candidate for vestryman from giving money, presents, or treating, or entertaining for election purposes. The movement for religious liberty was greatly accelerated by the conduct of many of the established clergy themselves in Virginia and elsewhere. A Virginia law, at the outbreak of the Revolution, forbade praying for the king; rather than obey, many ministers fled.

One of Virginia's first acts during the Revolution was a provision in the Constitution of 1776 excluding all ministers from membership in the legislature or privy council. A section, written by Patrick Henry, in the Virginia Bill of Rights, declared

that all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience. Virginia acts in 1779 and 1780 repealed various old laws. State guarantees of ministers' salaries were abolished. Likewise, powers of vestries as overseers of the poor. The right to perform marriages without licenses or publication was given to all ministers. Methodists, Baptists and men of other sects were allowed to serve in the army under officers of like faiths.

In October, 1785, the Virginia legislature passed an act granting religious freedom to everyone. This act had been prepared in 1777 by Thomas Jefferson; its final passage was greatly helped by James Madison. A condensation of the sentiments in the long preamble to this act shows the animating ideas:

God Almighty had created the mind free. All attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or by burdens or by civil incapacitations tended only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness. The propagation of religion by coercion was self-evidently not God's plan. Impious, presumptuous legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, had assumed dominion over the faiths of others. They had set up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and had tried to impose them upon others. To compel a man to supply money contributions for the propagation of opinions in which he did not believe was sinful and tyrannical. Every man should have the right of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern. Civil rights had no dependence on religious opinions any more than on opinions in physics or geometry. To deprive any citizen of an office because he did not believe in this or that faith was a manifest injury. It tended only to corrupt the principles of that religion by bribing with a monopoly of worldly honors and emoluments those who externally professed and conformed to the dominating creed. It was a dangerous fallacy to empower the civil

magistrate to judge matters of opinion; he would make his own opinion the determining criterion. Truth was great and would prevail. Left to itself it was the natural and sufficient antagonist to error which ceased to be dangerous when contradiction was freely permitted.<sup>1</sup>

In its Constitution of 1777, reaffirmed in its Constitution of 1789, Georgia decreed separation of Church and State, abolished tithes and taxes for church support, and prohibited any clergyman from being allowed a seat in the legislature. The North Carolina Constitution of 1776 and of 1778; the New York Constitution of 1777; and the Constitutions of Maryland, Delaware and South Carolina all, in one form or another, opened the way for religious liberty and contained provisions excluding clergymen from public office. All States except Rhode Island and Virginia as yet restricted religious liberty to either Protestants or (as in the case of Delaware and Maryland) to believers in the Christian religion. These qualifications were later either legislatively changed or shriveled into mere relics of the past, mockeries without any force whatever.

In the Federal Constitutional Convention a resolution was proposed to include a clause prohibiting religious tests as a qualification to any office or trust. Delegate Roger Sherman said that there was so much liberality on the subject among the American people that he did not think they would ever consent to any law requiring a religious oath; therefore he believed the clause superfluous. But with keen recollections of the long list of men kept out or put out of office because they would not swear under oath that their religious faith was of

<sup>1</sup> The act of 1785 completed the separation of Church and State in Virginia. But the Episcopal Church, as the successor of the Church of England, held on to large areas of glebe or parish lands. Inasmuch as the Virginia legislature had in its acts neglected specifically to resume public ownership of them, the Episcopal Church claimed ownership. There was an insistent public demand for their surrender. A protracted legal contest ensued. Finally, in 1840, the Church was defeated by a Court of Appeals decision.



the specially approved type, the Convention determined not to leave the question to hazard. It incorporated the clause in the Constitution. Inhibitions against any possibility of renewal of the old abuses and oppressions were completed by the adoption of the first of the ten amendments to the Constitution. Drafted by the first Congress and ratified by the States, it read: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Not without a struggle did ecclesiasticism die, especially in New England, stronghold of theocracy. Arguments long employed in the service of monarchy and aristocracy were now adroitly used in the attempt to conserve some of ecclesiasticism's expiring power. The keynote was that the populace was fickle, untrustworthy, destructive. "Let the restraints of religion be broken down, as they infallibly would be, by leaving the subject of worship to the humors of the multitude, and we might well defy all human wisdom and power to support and preserve order and government in the State." So announced Pastor Phillips Payson of Chelsea, Massachusetts, in a sermon on May 27, 1778, before the Massachusetts legislature. He and others making such pleas were voicing—perhaps unknowingly—the dictum of the Old World rulers and ruling classes that the church was an indispensable instrument of police power to hold down the people.

The age of democracy in religion had been ushered in, and no obstacle could withstand its progress. The last vestiges of ecclesiasticism's once mighty grip vanished early in the nineteenth century. Tithes were abolished in Vermont in 1807; Connecticut effaced them in 1818; and the optional tithe system surviving in Massachusetts was blotted from the statutes in 1833.

In his memoirs entitled "Political Parties in the United States," Martin Van Buren told how, when the election of Thomas Jef-

person as President of the United States seemed imminent, there was uttered in many a sermon the solemn warning that such an event would be "the signal for the prostration of our pulpits, the burning of our Bibles and the substitution of some Goddess of Reason."

Yet never did religion flourish more in the thought of the people, never did it have such genuine, exhilarating popular hold than after the introduction of religious liberty and the budding of democracy. DeTocqueville and other European students of American conditions noted the strong religious character of the American people. Religion was a subject of unexampled interest and attention in America. So declared the January, 1836, number of the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, published in New York City. "It is an age of unprecedented religious controversy. Compared with the prevalence and extent of this, the controversy of the Reformation was very limited, and it was full half of it, indeed, of a secular and political character. It was carried on by priests and kings and did not enlist the attention of the body of the people, as controversies do now, certainly not in the shape of an abstract question of truth or falsehood."

At the same time the American people were extremely vigilant in detecting and at once resisting any effort no matter how insidious to restore any part of the old conditions. Messages of governors and legislative and aldermanic reports contained many a reference to the conflict to wrest religious liberty and warnings to guard against any encroachments. Repeatedly did they point out that the duties of a spiritual guide and religious instructor were incompatible with those of a civil or military station. In almost every community in the United States and in almost every denomination ministers were held to be consecrated to the work of the ministry and under obligation to make that their life business.

True, religious prejudice remained, as it still persists among



the narrow-minded against adherents of some religions. But ebullitions of prejudice are matters of individual cast and do not in any sense affect Constitutional guarantees of law insuring every citizen, whatever his faith or lack of faith, full equality and protection. The body of the American people have squelched every movement actuated by prejudice. The virulent Know-Nothing outburst before the Civil War aimed at Catholics was put down by a nation overwhelmingly Protestant in composition and influence. Its successor, the American Protective Association, nearly forty years later, came forward with a similar blast of bigotry. Its aims were denounced by Protestants as well as by those of other faiths. It had suddenly attained a large membership which as suddenly dissolved into nothingness. In some vital respects a current movement, the Ku Klux Klan, has been merely a recrudescence of those earlier outbreaks of prejudice. Again we have seen how Americans of every variety of faith, religious and political, have joined in pronouncing it inimical to the spirit and laws of American institutions.

## CHAPTER II

### MONARCHY CHALLENGED

THE overthrow of monarchy, the second notable accomplishment of the American people, had far greater and wider results than the destruction of a governing institution. It was the real beginning of an eventual world-wide movement to put an end to the monarchical system itself. For many centuries the ruling of the mass of people by a single individual had been in general a fixed principle of government. Elevated to a sacred sphere and exercising more or less arbitrary powers a sovereign had been regarded as indispensable. Potentates and dynasties had long imposed their whims and will upon mankind. In many lands they succeeded in claiming the sanction of divine right.

When the American people enunciated their idea that all power should come from the people, it was everywhere derided as an impracticable, ruinous project. The American idea then proclaimed that the people were competent to govern themselves and by right should do so has gone round the world, gradually overturning kingcraft until now few thrones are left. Shorn of old-time assumptions, the occupants of these have dwindled into mere figureheads having enough to engage their attention in the effort to preserve their quaking hold. Even in Britain with its long-acclaimed constitutional monarchy, there emerge expressions that its government is, after all, substantially a republic. A London newspaper recently voiced this feeling in describing the Prince of Wales as "the future hereditary President of the British Republic."

Needless to say, neither republics nor legislative bodies were new ideas. The unique feature of the American Republic was

its originating upon lines and principles paving the way for a republic of the people.

Republics hitherto had been directed by favored classes concentrating political and other power in themselves. Before it became a kingdom, ancient Palestine was a republic, run, however, by a theocracy. The career of Rome as a republic was a continuous struggle between patricians and plebeians, ending in dictatorship and empire. In Greece privileged classes also lorded over slave populations. Carthage was under the tyranny of an oligarchy. England had dispensed with a monarchy during Cromwell's protectorate only to resume and to retain it with its entire system of privileged titled nobility. For a considerable period Holland had nominally been a republic, but its legislative body was composed of an oligarchy of nobles and merchants; much of the time princes of the house of Orange were the hereditary heads with an almost monarchical delegated executive power. At the date of the establishment of the American Republic, Switzerland was the only other country without a king. But some of the most influential town districts in Switzerland were controlled by a small hereditary burgher oligarchy which had long monopolized political rights and offices and which loaded country districts with heavy taxes.

In the aim to glorify monarchy's superior governing virtue, kings and their retinues had cunningly disseminated the doctrine that monarchy meant strength and order; popular rule, weakness and discord. Such a claim was obviously untrue in view of the never-ending series of dynastic, religious, feudal and economic commotions and wars in which peoples had been driven by monarchs or powerful groups. In ages, however, when the mass was kept in a state of superstition and ignorance it had no opportunities to learn the true causes and significance of events. The possibility of a democracy based upon general intelligence, enlightenment and aspiration was not thought of

even by men suffering imprisonment, facing torture and braving death in opposing tyranny.

At the opening of the seventeenth century the delusion was still largely pervasive that tumult was inseparable from democracy. Except to teach the dread of it the very mention of the word democracy was odious to authority. There was no more effective way of discrediting any person or group than to make accusations of democratic tendencies. America was hardly settled when, in 1623, charges were made against the form of government in Virginia. "As it now stands," the formal complaint to King Charles I read, "it is Democratical and tumultuous, and therefore fit to be altered and reduced to the hands of some few persons." The Virginia Company, Lord Cavendish presiding, hurriedly met at its London headquarters to prepare an answer to charges of such gravity. The allegations, the answer set forth, were the doings of malcontents and a slander. That government, the answer further explained, "cannot be termed Democratical where the King only hath absolute power and where people swear allegiance only to him, but is truly Monarchical." King Charles dissolved the company.

In the very act of introducing some of the substance of democracy, the Puritans in Massachusetts carefully avoided using the word itself. In their Declaration of Rights, of November 15, 1636, Plymouth Colony settlers retained the customary European classification of themselves as subjects. But, they specified, they had come to America "as freeborn Subjects of the State of England Indued with all and singular the privileges belonging to such." No law or order, they warned, should be imposed upon them; all laws were to be made only by their own legislature. This was an assertion of local democratic rights uncommon for the age. In operation, however, the Puritan scheme of government throughout Massachusetts included only part of the people. Freemen were those conforming to estab-

lished church doctrines and having taxable estates. Only free-men were allowed votes, and they were compelled to vote; unless he had a good excuse for not doing so a person was, by explicit law, amenable to be fined. In making voting at election a duty, the Puritan aim was as much to insure Congregational Church supremacy as to maintain interest in public affairs.

Along the same general lines ran the Connecticut Declaration of Rights, of May, 1650. It was a notification to royal authority of the things that must not be done under color of imposed law. No man's life should be taken away. No man's honor or good name should be stained. No man's person should be arrested, restrained, banished, dismembered or in any way punished. No man should be deprived of his wife and children, nor his goods or estate taken away from him. Punishments could be inflicted only under laws enacted by the General Assembly. Lacking a specific law, the word of God was to be law. Liberties, immunities and privileges were to be accorded to every man "in his place and proportion." Humanity, civility and Christianity called for this. The tranquillity and stability of the church and of the commonwealth demanded it.

The use at this time of the term commonwealth was not remarkable. The Commonwealth of Oliver Cromwell was in power in England. But while King Charles I was still reigning the Rhode Island settlers, in 1641 (under show, however, of deference to royalty), had announced themselves as a democracy. The Declaration of Rights of the General Court of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations declared, in that year, that its government "in favor of our Prince is a Democracy or Popular Government" Another Rhode Island Declaration of Rights in 1647, iterating that the form of government established was democratical, specified exactly what was meant. It was a government "held by the free and voluntary consent of



all, or the greater part of the free inhabitants." As in Massachusetts and elsewhere there were property qualifications in Rhode Island for voters. Rhode Island was said to have passed a law allowing all Christians, except Roman Catholics, to vote at elections. It has been contended that the clause excluding Catholics was never originally adopted but was inserted later by a committee appointed to prepare a digest of the Colony's laws. At any rate, this religious disqualification was formally repealed by a law passed in 1783. But property qualification for suffrage long remained.

Thomas Hooker, a Puritan pastor, tried in vain to have a pure democracy established in New England. Between 1633 and 1647 he agitated against limiting the voting right to church members and men of property. No government, he expounded, justly existed except by the free consent of the people. This right belonged to the people by God's own allowance "because, by a free choice, the hearts of the people will be more inclined to the love of the persons chosen and more ready to yield obedience." He was the first apostle of the principle of modern democracy that all citizens, irrespective of property considerations, have the equal right to vote. But in his time, and in fact long afterward, the conception of democracy was interwoven with a variation of the aristocratic idea that the few could decide affairs much better than the many.

Town meetings were, therefore, not assemblages of all kinds of men, but only of select residents whose vouched orthodoxy and property possessions entitled them to be present. Originally, as the text of the Plymouth Colony laws of 1675 and 1678 shows, they were intended as places of public worship. By those laws each town, at its own expense, was required to erect a public meeting place. If any town refused or neglected, the governor and magistrates were to see to it that it was built and were empowered to levy the extra cost upon the inhabit-



ants. Town meetings became centers of public discussion, and were the precursors of the mass meetings of later times.

With the return to the throne of King Charles II, energetic efforts were made to uproot both democratic ideas and methods in the American colonies. In their report in 1666 the King's Commissioners denounced Massachusetts as a refractory colony. Its people, the report complained, had declined to use the king's name in procedure or ceremonial. They were the last and most difficult to be persuaded "to use His Majesty's name in their forms of justice." By blowing of trumpet, the General Court there had declared itself supreme. The King's Commissioners had tried to hold formal sittings and hear appeals, but the General Assembly had refused to permit these hearings, dismissing them as mere pretensions of authority. So the report went on. Given in full in the *London Documents* (Vol. 3, *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York*) it was noteworthy in more than one respect. It was the first of a long line of attempts indirectly to discredit formative American democratic ideas by seeking to ridicule the people developing them. It portrayed Puritans as rude, uncouth, hypocritical, toadies to the rich, cruel, persecuting, and in general of no account.

A vigorously debated question of the day was the efficacy of the democratic order of government as opposed to that of monarchy and aristocracy. Royal officials could not stop the discussion. William Penn was one of those of non-committal policy. He wrote that he would suggest no choice. "I know what is said by the several admirers of Monarchy, Aristocracy and Democracy, which are the rule of one, a few, and many, and are the three common ideas of government when men discourse on that subject. . . . Any Government is free to the people under it when the laws rule, and the people are a party to those laws, and more than this is Tyranny, Oligarchy and Confusion."

Governments, he argued, rather depended upon men than men upon governments. "Let men be good, and the government cannot be bad. But if men be bad, let the government be never so good, they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their turn. . . ."

It was Massachusetts ideas which had preponderant influence throughout the colonies. So reported Governor Andros to the Council of Trade in 1678. Widespread defiance of proprietary lords and royal officials extended to ceremonial forms savoring too much of pomp. On one occasion, the Maryland Assembly passed a resolution that it could not be adjourned without its own consent. At another time—in 1682—it requested of Lord Baltimore the surrender of his power of calling and dissolving the legislature, and it refused to receive members of the upper house because of their wearing swords. The New York Assembly, on May 13, 1691, passed an act declaratory of the people's rights, one of which was held to be householders' exemption from the quartering of the king's soldiers. In calling for the repeal of this act, the Lords of Trade at London protested that this provision "may be inconvenient to His Majesty's service there."

Colonel Robert Quarry, a crown official, sent in 1703 a long communication to the Lords of Trade. See, it said in effect, how New England's influence had contagiously spread, inciting other colonies to demand the same privileges and liberties. There, for example, was Virginia. Its Assembly "conclude themselves entitled to all the rights and privileges of an English Parliament." Its Council "have vanity enough to think that they almost stand upon equal terms with the Right Honorable The House of Lords." Evidence of "the leaven of these notions" could be found in the Virginia Council's latest address to the queen. Now or never, Quarry pressed, was the time to maintain the queen's authority, and put a stop to these "pernicious notions"

which were increasing daily in all the colonies. "A frown from Her Majesty now can do more than perhaps an army hereafter." And why not, urged Quarry, put immediately into effect the plan which the Lords of Trade had been considering of reducing all the colonies "to one standard, rule and Constitution of Government, as near as circumstances will admit, and also to one standard of Coin?"

Even Quakers proved unmanageable. Governor John Evans, a mere stripling who had been a juvenile officer in the queen's palace, demanded of the Pennsylvania Assembly on June 20, 1705, that it expel William Biles, a member, for alleged seditious expressions. The Assembly refused this command to "purge itself of the contagion of said pernicious member." Frequent messages from Governor Evans on one subject or another were ignored. On February 6, 1707, Evans ceremoniously went to the Assembly for a conference. The Speaker refused to stand before the Governor as usage required. "Whoever speaks in my presence as the representative of the Crown should stand all of the time," Evans told him. Tenaciously keeping his seat, the Speaker replied: "I sit here as the mouthpiece of the Assembly, and will take directions from it alone. I am a free agent taking orders from no source but the House. I have authority from the House to end this conference when I see fit and I now do it." The Speaker thereupon left. The documentary account in the Pennsylvania archives concludes, "So the whole House rising departed abruptly with him." Evans remonstrated. "But they all departed without any further answer."

The Pennsylvania Assembly repeatedly denied its governors any power in the appropriation of public money and in the appointment of militia officers. Until the Revolution royal governors in Pennsylvania ineffectually complained of their bad treatment. Quaker lawmakers there, according to a report made

to the king by the Lords of Trade, in 1721, hit upon an ingenious method of circumventing royalty. The charter granted to William Penn by King Charles II allowed five years for the transmitting of laws for royal approval but gave the king only six months for repealing them. "If not then repealed," said the report, "they are then reputed [accepted as] Laws, from whence it frequently happens that several Laws, unfit for the Royal Assent, continue for five years, and after having been disallowed by the Crown, are enacted again, and by this practice become in a manner perpetual."

The contest gathered increasing momentum from Britain's protracted attempt to crush American material development. This economic phase involved much more than opposition to particular laws imposed by distant authority. It was a revolt gradually growing more acute against a systematic shackling of American energies and ambitions. With a country abounding in natural resources, the colonists naturally saw no reason why they should not develop them to the fullest capacity. But such a movement came in collision with the interests of British manufacturers and shippers. Responding to their demands Parliament began enacting summary legislation in 1699 by prohibiting the exportation of American woollen goods to any place whatever.

It soon became evident to the king's officials in America that nothing less than laws carrying the most severe penalties would be likely to impress the determined colonists. They paid no attention to official orders. In calling notice to the export of ship timber from New Hampshire and Massachusetts to Spain and Portugal, Captain-General and Governor the Earl of Bellomont informed the Lords of Trade, January 2, 1701, that "these people laugh at your Lordships' order against it, and so they would at an order from the King." Bellomont urged an act of Parliament making the trade a penal offense.



Law after law was passed by Parliament but the colonists found ways of evading them, chiefly by smuggling. The New York Assembly in 1720 went to the significant length of passing a law laying a duty of two per cent. prime duty upon the importation of European goods, an act soon afterward repealed by the king. A report in 1721 of the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations to the king dwelt upon the audacious enterprise of American colonists; how despite all laws they were supplying Spain, Portugal and the West Indies with considerable quantities of lumber and other products; and how they were building vessels, and making woolen, leather and other goods for their own use. "On all occasions," said the report, "they affect too great an Independence of their Mother Kingdom." The report described the rebelliousness of certain proprietary heads of some of the colonies who had "frequently refused obedience to such orders as have been given by your Majesty's Royal Predecessors; have broken through the laws of trade and navigation; made laws of their own, contrary to those of Great Britain; given shelter to pirates and outlaws, and refuse to contribute to the defense of the Neighboring Colonies. . . . They have shown too great an inclination to be independent of their Mother Country, and have carried on a trade destructive to that of Great Britain."

The term "pirates and outlaws" sounded formidable but did not signify what it implied. Smugglers were frequently classified as pirates, and outlaws were too often simply fugitives from England driven to the colonies by harsh statutes against debts or other breaches of law not serious in themselves but at that time heavily punishable. North Carolina was then a favorite place of refuge for many of these so-called vagabonds and outlaws.

The report further pointed out that the preservation of woods in America, hitherto much neglected, would prove an inexhaustible

source of supply for the British Royal Navy, and that although several laws had been passed in England for the purpose, the colonists gave little regard to them. The Lords Commissioners recommended that the government of the entire colonies be centralized under the direction of one lord-lieutenant or captain-general.

Because workmen were drawn to America, the Master Builders of London petitioned the Lords of Trade not to encourage shipbuilding in America. In 1729 an innocent-appearing bill with a disingenuous title was introduced in Parliament. It was nominally "A Bill for Preservation of His Majesty's Woods in America, and for the Encouragement of the Importation of Naval Stores from thence." But the text of the bill prohibited American colonists from supplying lumber for sugar and other factories in America; forbade iron foundries; and ordered all British officials, at the risk of being penalized, to demolish existing manufacturing works. Ineffectually did the American colonists protest against the passage of a series of repressive acts forbidding the manufacture and sale of lumber, iron, leather, felt, paper and other products.



## CHAPTER III

### MONARCHY EXTINGUISHED

ECCLESIASTICAL censorship had throttled various embryo newspapers. Now came royal censorship with its clamp becoming heavier as newspapers showed an increasing tendency to criticize.

The *New England Courant* of Boston, started in 1721 by James Franklin and published in 1724 by Benjamin Franklin, did attack royal officials, the clergy and individuals. This example was not permitted to continue. Thereafter, newspapers resorted to the ruse of warding off official suspicions by blandly explaining that their mission was to diffuse the arts of cultivation. The opening address in 1728 of the *New England Weekly Journal* (printed on a half sheet of foolscap and comprising two pages, two columns to the page) gave assurances that its purpose was to provide "some regular schemes for the Entertainment of the ingenious Reader, and the encouragement of Wit and Politeness." Introducing the Boston *Weekly Rehearsal* in 1731, editor Jeremy Gridley explained that the benign nature of the contents would be circumscribed by nothing but discretion, duty and good manners. Well aware, he wrote, of the almost insuperable difficulty "of being an original in this knowing and polite age" he would make his paper a narrative of whatever should occur in commerce or in the civil or learned world. But of course no newspaper could touch upon events in the domain of commerce without trenching upon the uppermost subject of the strangling of American commerce. In various deft ways comment was made. Most artfully did Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1729 disclose the real na-

ture of a parliamentary bill aimed at the trade of the American colonies.

Gagging of American newspapers was not, however, long meekly accepted. In 1733 John Peter Zenger established the *New York Weekly Journal*. Upon a charge of seditious libel in criticizing the royal governor he was arrested in 1735. His criticism, in reality, was more one of the king's government than of the governor himself. Successive governors had, in addition to royal instructions, a personal reason for intimidating editors. Most of the governors sent over from England came with the aim to make their fortunes in as speedy a time as possible and sought to prevent exposure of their misdeeds. On one occasion Lord Cornbury induced the New York Assembly to grant an appropriation of £1,500 under the pretense that he would use it to erect a battery at the Narrows. This sum was raised by a levy of special personal taxation including a tax upon lawyers and also upon bachelors more than twenty-five years old. Lord Cornbury pocketed the entire sum. His was far from being an isolated case.

Zenger's trial was a notable event. He was defended by Andrew Hamilton, eighty years old, who had come from Philadelphia for the occasion. Hamilton's speech was full of fire. "This," said Hamilton, "is not the cause of a poor printer, nor of New York alone which you are now trying. No! it may in its consequences affect every freeman that lives under the British Government upon the main of America. It is the cause of Liberty. . . . Every man who prefers freedom to a life of slavery will bless and honor you who have baffled the attempts of tyranny, and by an impartial and uncorrupt verdict laid a noble foundation for securing to ourselves, our posterity and our neighbors that to which nature and the laws of our country have given us a right—the liberty of both exposing

and opposing arbitrary power, in these parts of the world at least, by speaking and writing the truth."

Zenger was acquitted. "The instant the verdict was known," says an account of the time, "the impetuous acclamation shouted by the audience shook the hall, and a mixture of amazement, terror and wrath appeared in the bench. One of the judges threatened imprisonment of the leader of this tumult, if he could be discovered. Mr. Hamilton was conducted from the hall by the crowd to a splendid entertainment. The whole city renewed the compliment at his departure the next day; he entered the barge under a salute of cannon, and the corporation [of the City of New York] presented him with the freedom of the city in a gold box, on which its arms were engraved."

For the first time, the American press was now really free. Year after year newspapers jubilantly proclaimed the fact. There were some further prosecutions but no jury would convict. The introductory address in 1748 of the Boston *Independent Advertiser* (to which Samuel Adams was a contributor of essays) was a joyous declaration of freedom. That newspaper would, said the address, be free to truth, good manners and good sense, and at the same time free from all licentious reflection, insolence and abuse. It would publish whatever might be needed to express and defend the rights and liberties of mankind and of the country. It would aim to inspire the people with a proper sense of their own condition and rouse them to pursue such objects as their interests required.

This was a typical example of the newspaper attitude throughout the colonies. With hardly an exception all stressed the fact that not only would they be politically free but that their constant aim would be to publish such matters as would conduce to the promotion of virtue, learning and other essentials of public welfare. Some newspapers, such as the Boston *Gazette and*

*Country Journal*, published essays teaching that love of the human race was a moral and religious duty.

Other newspapers—the *Maryland Journal and the Baltimore Advertiser* was one of these—emphasized their stand in favor of liberty and the rights of mankind by saying that they would be superior to all partisan considerations. “The liberty of the press,” read a letter signed “Americus Justitia” in the *New York Gazette or Weekly Post Boy*, on August 7, 1766, “is by us allowed to be the great banner of our liberties—for should the liberty of complaining by this channel be taken away, no branch of liberty can be safe.”

Where force is present to overawe, policy may demand of a protesting people the professing of allegiance to the head and form of government while the movement itself is directed against the acts of that government. Judging from the literal text of resolutions passed by patriotic bodies of colonists after the imposition of the Stamp Act, there was no aim to overthrow monarchy. The Sons of Liberty were an extremely militant body which did much to arouse and organize resistance throughout the country. Their resolutions in 1766 were highly belligerent, serving notice that no regard would be given to the Stamp Act, and that it would be opposed by force if the glorious cause of liberty required it. Yet these resolutions avowed loyalty to monarchy.

Thus, in their resolutions the Sons of Liberty of Woodbridge, New Jersey, on February 26, 1766, declared that “we yield hearty and unfeigned obedience to His Majesty King George the Third.” The resolutions on March 11, 1766, of the Sons of Liberty of Piscataway, New Jersey, ended by saying that “we do bear true allegiance to His Most Sacred Majesty, King George the Third, acknowledge him as our rightful sovereign, and will at all times faithfully adhere to his Royal person and



just Government, and heartily oppose every attempt to injure his Person, Crown or Dignity.”

The conclusion is unavoidable that such expressions in these and other Sons of Liberty resolutions were injected wholly for policy's sake. They were mere formal professions obviously at complete variance with the fiery other portions of the resolutions. Furthermore, all or nearly all of these resolutions adopted in different places came in substance from a central committee of the Sons of Liberty of New York City which was directing propaganda and organization. Ten years later when the Revolution was under way the indictment was of the king himself. In the Virginia Declaration of Rights, adopted immediately before the Declaration of Independence, the principles laid down were those directly opposed to monarchy. All power, they declared, was vested in and derived from the people. All officials were simply trustees and servants of the people, and at all times amenable to them. When a government was found inadequate for public welfare, a majority of the community had the inalienable right to reform, alter or abolish. The Declaration of Independence closely followed the enumeration of these and other principles in the Virginia Declaration of Rights. “The history of the present King of England is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States,” said the Declaration of Independence, which then gave an itemized list of his offenses.

It is unnecessary to enter into the well-known story of the American Revolution. But it will be advisable to mention some features usually overlooked. The lawyers, supposedly worshipers of precedent, were a potent revolutionary influence. From the already well-defined tendencies of American life many had imbibed new principles of the foundation of political power causing them to oppose the continuation of monarchy. The



additional fact that many were counsel to merchants greatly broadened their views and undermined their respect for laws which were but instruments in the economic war against the colonies. For their attacks upon these laws they had long made themselves obnoxious to royal governors who denounced them as pettifoggers and otherwise insulted and harassed them on every possible occasion. One of the objects of the Stamp Act was to drive from practice such lawyers as thus made themselves objectionable. Of the body of lawyers, few opposed the Revolution.

Another and significant feature was that a large part of the soldiers in the Continental army had no direct interest whatever in the slogan, "No taxation without representation." They were actuated by the inspiring prospect of a new order in which they, the common people, would obtain hitherto denied advantages. At the time of the Revolution less than one-third of the American people, it was said, were freeholders possessing the right to vote.

With the Revolution's success, the British monarchy was expelled. But in more or less disguised form the monarchical idea still had in America a small but powerful body of supporters, chiefly composed of some large landholders and manufacturers and a number of business men and their connections. Not love of monarchy but fear of popular rule swayed these elements.

Alexander Hamilton was the leading spokesman of this party. According to Gouverneur Morris he hated republican government because he confounded it with democratical government. Hamilton believed this would end in desperation, and in the meantime be destructive to public morality. Morris further wrote that Hamilton "never failed on every occasion to advocate the excellence of and avow his attachment to monarchical government." Luther Martin, another delegate to the Federal

Constitutional Convention, also described in a speech to the Maryland legislature, the aims of the party "whose object and wish was to abolish and annihilate all State Governments, and to bring forward one general government of a monarchical nature under certain restrictions and limitations." James Madison also wrote that it was well known that in the Federal Constitutional Convention there were individuals having a bias toward monarchy.

Hamilton favored a President and Senate chosen practically for life. Singular as the view may seem now when the United States is vastly larger in area and population, Hamilton, on June 18, 1787, declared that he "was almost led to despair that a republican government could be established over so great an extent." When Delegate Reed proposed a nine years' term for Senators, Elbridge Gerry said: "It appears to me that the American people have the greatest aversion to monarchy and the nearer our government approaches to it, the less chance we have for their approbation." After the adoption of the Constitution, Hamilton in defending it admitted in one of his Federalist Papers (No. 67) "the aversion of the people to monarchy," and in arguing for the ratification of the Constitution insisted that it was absurd to attribute any monarchical idea to its provisions.

At this time there was a distinct recession from the maximum lofty feeling that had carried the Revolution to success. It was both a relaxing and a recuperative period. In a later chapter we shall see how this reaction affected the question of slavery. Here one of the contributing causes will be explained. During the Revolution economic conditions were very bad. After the cause was won, men set about retrieving their broken fortunes or sought to make up for lost time in acquiring a competence. Various members of the Federal Constitutional Convention were promoters of land companies or banks. This aim to establish

themselves in good circumstances engaged the attention of many men or groups of men.

But there was one subject as to which popular enthusiasm did not flag. This was the overthrowing of the monarchical system and the example the American people had thereby set for other peoples to emulate. It was the consistent theme of many a speech, banquet toast and newspaper editorial. One of the numerous speakers was Charles Pinckney, a delegate to the Federal Constitutional Convention. His speech, delivered before the South Carolina Convention, on March 14, 1788, on the adoption of the Federal Constitution, was representative of the views generally expressed.

"We have been taught here to believe," he said, "that all power belongs of right to the people; that it flows immediately from them, and is delegated to their officers for the public good; that our rulers are the servants of the people, amenable to their will, and created for their use. How different are the Governments of Europe! There the people are the servants and subjects of their rulers; there merit or talent has little or no influence; but all the honors and offices of government are swallowed up by birth, by fortune or by rank.

"From the European world are no precedents to be drawn for a people who think they are capable of governing themselves. Instead of receiving instruction from them we may, with pride, affirm that, new as this country is in point of settlement, inexperienced as she must be upon questions of government, she still has read more useful lessons to the Old World, she has made them more acquainted with their own rights, than they had otherwise been for centuries. It is with pride I repeat that, old and experienced as they are, they are indebted to us for light upon points of all others the most interesting."

Then Pinckney went on to ask whether, had it not been for the American Revolution, would there have been movements of

peoples in Ireland, in the Netherlands, and in France resisting the edicts of monarchs and demanding rights? Undoubtedly not, he said. "Let it then," he went on, "be our boast that we have already taught some of the oldest and wisest nations to explore their rights as men; and let it be our prayer that the effects of the Revolution may never cease to operate until they have unshackled all the nations that have firmness to resist the fetters of despotism."

The very next year came the French Revolution, followed by the long period of wars ending in the downfall of Napoleon, the return of the Bourbon dynasty to France, and the ascendancy of the confederated monarchs of Europe. Feeling secure in their power three of these kings formed the Holy Alliance.

How did the American people view this compact? To obtain a clear account we have only to consider the sentiments expressed in Congress in 1822 in the debate over the bill to recognize the independence of the South American countries which had thrown off Spanish monarchical rule. The speech of David Trumbull of Kentucky, the leading speaker in support of the bill, may be accurately described as embodying the sentiments of other speakers for the bill, which passed by a vote of 167 to 1. Epitomized, Trumbull's speech said:

"The spirit of the age is against the European system. The American system has invaded Europe and spread alarm and consternation everywhere among its kings and emperors. A coalition of crowned heads has been created to oppose it, and two millions of armed men embodied to expel it from that continent.

"And what are those systems? What is the American system agitating two continents and causing kings to shudder at it, while their subjects bid it welcome? The American system is representative government, freedom of opinion, religious liberty, freedom of speech and of the press, and commercial freedom. The European system is monarchy, imperial government, aristocracy, arbi-



trary power on the one hand, and passive obedience and unconditional submission on the other. The commercial character of the European system is prohibition, restriction, interdiction, impressment, colonial monopoly and maritime domination. The European system is artificial, and will perish with the spurious causes that produced it. The American system is natural and therefore durable. It is natural because it springs from public opinion acting freely for itself, and durable because it is guaranteed by written Constitutions. It had its birth in our Revolution. The impulse of the age accelerates its motion. Nothing can impede its march.

“Shall we as a nation, stifle all our sympathies in favor of free government, to gratify the vainglorious pride of Spain? If we do we shall betray the rights and interests of republics. Heaven, in giving freedom to us first, made it our primal eldest duty to go forth first and acknowledge it to others. Some statesmen hold that nations whose political institutions have been formed in the school of despotism must undergo long periods of probationary preparation before they can be qualified for self-government. This is but a modification of the exploded maxim that ‘the people know not how to govern.’ Men and nations are shaking off their mental imbecilities, and preparing themselves to regulate their own affairs. Wars were fought formerly for royal families and dynasties; now men fight for written Constitutions and for the rights of man, and in fighting learn to govern for themselves. Our continent is the chosen land of liberty selected by the unseen will of Providence to till the soil and feed the famished nations with the food of independence. Let us perform this sacred trust. It is our duty as a free people not to sanction but to refute the heresies that nations are incapable of managing their own concerns.

“These are glorious epochs. A continent has disenchained itself and stands unfettered and erect. It is the birthday of a



hemisphere redeemed. It is the jubilee of nations. Let the world rejoice!"

On April 11, 1826, James Buchanan, supporting a motion in the House of Representatives to appoint a mission to the Assembly of American Nations at Panama, eulogized the Monroe Doctrine and described why the American people had enthusiastically acclaimed it. Within a few years, he said, seven new republics had emerged from the chaos of Spanish colonial despotism. In 1823 Spain called upon the Holy Alliance to assist in subjugating her revolting colonies. In this alarming posture what did the United States do?

"The celebrated message of President James Monroe of December 2, 1823," Buchanan said, "announced to the Holy Alliance and to the world that we could not view with indifference the hostile interposition of any European power against the independence of the Southern Republics, but would consider such an attempt as dangerous to our own peace and safety. This declaration was reëchoed by millions of freemen. It was received with enthusiasm in every part of the Union. It answered the purpose for which it was intended, and the danger which threatened the South American Republics passed away."

The fear of the spread of American ideas was shown at this time and for decades later by one of the means encouraged by crowned rulers and the governing classes in Europe to combat them. Ostensibly with the object of studying people and conditions, travelers came to the United States and wrote articles and books most of which were sheer caricatures. There were a few impartial, discerning accounts written but they were few, indeed. Nearly all of the hostile productions, suspiciously and monotonously alike in view and tone, presented descriptions the effect of which was to hold Americans, their ways and institutions up to ridicule. The evident aim was to produce among European

peoples the belief that the American Republic was merely an experiment doomed to fail ignominiously.

Kingcraft and its plumaged courtiers contended in vain, although deluding themselves with the notion that because their power was still fixed it was enduring. The progress of ideas is not to be judged by their status at any particular period but by the sequence of events. Perspective tells the story.

In due course of affairs one monarchy after another with its system was expelled to be replaced by republics and the American model of a written constitution. When Napoleon III, ruling France, tried to impose upon Mexico a personally selected emperor, the United States made his scheme abortive. Soon France again became a republic. On a single day in 1889, Brazil swept out its monarchy, shipping Emperor Dom Pedro off to Portugal the very next morning. Excepting the three small colonies of British Guiana, Dutch Guiana and French Guiana, the entire mainland of South America has since been under republican government. Boer republics were established in Africa; though later overcome and turned into British colonies they were given autonomous powers—one of the lessons taught by the American Revolution. Two decades pass and China discards its ancient monarchy system. And where are now the thrones of the successors of that glittering Holy Alliance trio of Russia, Prussia and Austria, who, a century ago, thought that they could dictate the destinies of mankind? All vanished. Gone, too, are other European monarchies strong in the might of power and prestige at the time when that "vagabond army of ruffians with paper pay, bad clothing and worse spirits" (so a monarchical newspaper described the American Revolutionary Army), was fighting for principles and ideas. Even Turkey, so long regarded as the immovable stronghold of enthroned absolutism, is now a republic.

## CHAPTER IV

### ARISTOCRACY INTRENCHED

"A poor man has rarely the honor of speaking to a gentleman on any terms. How many poor men, common men and mechanics have been made happy within this fortnight by a shake of the hand, a pleasing smile and a little familiar chat with gentlemen who have not for these seven years past condescended to look at them. Blessed state which brings all so nearly on a level!"

So announced the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* on April 27, 1776, in a dissertation upon the value of annual elections. These, it said, "will even oblige gentlemen to speak to you once a year, who would despise you forever, were it not that you can bestow something upon them. . . . Be freemen, then, and you will be companions for gentlemen annually."

This ironical observation suffices to introduce a glimpse, although a meager one, of the aristocratical system then prevailing. It was a European system implanted in America from the very settlement of the country. Based upon caste and rank its membership was virtually defined in law itself as a class separate and distinct from the rest of the people. Vested with legal and political privileges and social power it asserted its inborn superiority and exacted deference. It was not a moneyed aristocracy, although families of wealth edged their way into it and promptly took on airs of haughtiness. It was an aristocracy founded upon birth and official and ecclesiastical position. Lineage with heraldry was its first requirement; rank the second. By the power of money families attaining riches could in time contrive to fabricate the one and acquire or claim the other.

Some aspects of this aristocratical class domination outlasted

the Revolution and the destruction of monarchy. The effacing of aristocracy and the discriminations given to it by law and social custom was the third large accomplishment of the American people.

At the very outset of America's settlement aristocratical distinctions borrowed or adapted from Europe were put into law. One of the very first laws in Virginia, adopted in 1623, exempted "persons of quality" from the lashing ordinarily inflicted for certain offenses. They were "not fit to undergo corporal punishment," said the law, which left to the commander's discretion the alternative of imprisoning them, which he never did. For very serious offenses "persons of quality" merely had to pay a fine. Another Virginia law, repeated in 1632, commanded all servants to give, "at their uttermost perils"—which meant lashing, branding and imprisonment—exact obedience to their superiors. The term servant then, and for a long time, did not have the limited domestic application it now has. It comprehended not only those working in and about houses, but agricultural, mechanical, and other workers, usually bonded to the master for a long term of years.

In one form or another all of the colonies had laws, many of a feudal nature, rigorously prescribing what inferiors were not allowed to do. A servant in Virginia marrying without a certificate of permission from master or mistress was compelled to serve from a year to two or more years extra time after the bonded term had expired. So ordered the law of 1642, reenacted at frequent later times. Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and other colonies all had varyingly severe laws against runaway servants as well as against fugitive slaves. If a servant ran away he was, in New England as well as elsewhere, pursued by an armed posse as a dangerous criminal now would be. There were laws generally penalizing anyone harboring a runaway servant. In case the servant pleaded



cruel treatment as a justification, the customary procedure of the courts in many colonies was simply to warn master or mistress. After being returned to his or her master or mistress the servant, in some colonies, was forced to serve additional time to the regular bonded term.

But a runaway did not always mean a servant actually fleeing. By the Maryland law of April, 1715, for instance, no servant under indenture or working for wages was allowed to travel more than ten miles from the master's house without a note from "master, mistress, dame or overseer"; any hapless man or maid servant doing this was classed as a runaway and was liable to the full penalties. In New York where the Patroons or manorial lords held sway, the law directed that no man or woman, man servant or maid servant, could, without written consent, leave service during the time that they had agreed to give service. If, in Virginia, a servant ran away the second time, he was, according to repeated laws, pronounced an "incorrigible rogue" and the letter R was branded on his cheek. The Maryland statute of May 24, 1715, allowed the master to give a white servant ten lashes on the bare back; if the master sought to give more he could get permission from a justice of the peace to apply up to thirty-nine lashes. A disobedient servant in North Carolina, according to the law of 1741, was punishable by twenty-one lashes. In South Carolina, by the law of 1744, no servant was permitted to travel more than two miles without a note from master or mistress; the penalty for the runaway was twenty-one lashes on the bare back. We have given here only the briefest summary of the provisions of a host of laws all designed for one purpose. This was to keep the poor whites sent from Europe in a state of servitude; the very word servitude was used in some of the statutes.

One thing more needed to complete measures for the insuring of unconditional obedience to superiors was generally supplied



by differing laws. This was the immunity of masters for brutally treating underlings. All masters were not cruel, but the laws, by penalizing servants who resented blows and struck back, placed a sinister means of tyranny in their power. Even in Massachusetts, where laws respecting working people were somewhat better than elsewhere, the only redress a servant long had if the master knocked out his eye or smashed his teeth was (by the law of 1630) to go to court, humbly petition recompense and plead cruelty as grounds for quitting service.

In Virginia any servant resisting maltreatment was listed by the law of 1659 as "audacious, unruly, stubborn and incorrigible." But was he or she sent to prison? Such a course would have deprived aristocracy of the services of maids, butlers, cooks, carpenters, masons, tailors, gardeners and other workers. So the law considerably ordered that any servant convicted of striking back was to serve two years more after the term of service "by indenture, custom or law" had expired. Courts everywhere were composed of judges either belonging to the aristocracy or dependent upon its favor. All were imbued with the Old World idea that menials had to be kept in their places.

Some laws were later altered or modified, but substantially the relation of master and servant remained the same. Force, the implement of Old World aristocracy, was transplanted as an institution. Until a comparatively recent date a survival of this once widespread use of force by aristocracy was seen in the flogging of peasants in Russia. After newspapers were established in the American colonies in the eighteenth century advertisements were constantly published containing descriptions of runaway tailors, blacksmiths, shoemakers, farmers, coopers, clockmakers, mechanics, weavers, domestics, apprentices and other workers. Rewards were offered for their capture.

Almost simultaneously with the settlement of America there was also introduced a measure long used by European aristocracy

with crushing effect. This was the law for the imprisonment of debtors.

Numerous of the servant class were men and women who, unable to pay their passage from Europe, were sold by the ship's captain for a term of years of service; others were persons transported for offenses many of which now would be classed as minor transgressions or mere misdemeanors. Laws in some places allowed the assignment of servants like any other property. In various colonies laws restricted servants to buying exclusively from their master who often contrived to keep them in debt and used the fact as an additional means to hold them in service and submission. Merchants also used this law with a severity seldom mitigated.

Distinction in garb was another Old World idea imitated in America. In law or compelling social custom or both, the common people were forbidden from wearing such apparel as was thought befitted their superiors only. Even the Puritans in Massachusetts made this sharp differentiation.

"We declare our utter detestation and dislike," said a Massachusetts law of 1651, "that men and women of mean condition, education and callings should take upon themselves the garb of gentlemen by the wearing of gold or silver lace, or buttons, or points at their knees, to walk in great boots; or women to wear silk or tiffany hoods or scarfs, which, though allowable in persons of greater estates, or more liberal education, yet we cannot but judge it intolerable in persons of such like condition." The Massachusetts law of 1651 and succeeding laws restricted the wearing of fine clothes to those having estates of a specified value. Connecticut copied some of these laws. Coarse cloths and homespun linens were worn by the "meaner sort" in the colonies generally. The impoverished person was officially reprobated as a pauper. A Virginia law of 1748 compelled every such poor person to wear visibly on the right sleeve a token of degrada-

tion in the form of a badge cut in blue, red or green cloth on which was inscribed the name of the parish to which he or she belonged.

The term gentleman was not a gratuitous offering to good breeding and high character. It was an actual, formal, legal distinction of rank. The gentry was recognized as a special class. In, for example, the Minutes of the Common Council of New York City of the seventeenth and part of the eighteenth century, individuals of that class were registered as "John Lewin, Gentleman," "Abel Smith, Gentleman," and so forth. Until after the Revolution a mayor was addressed and described as "the Worshipfull the Mayor." A governor was always "Your Excellency." Coats-of-arms were flaunted on every occasion.

Some of these laws intrenching aristocracy and throwing a glamour around it were enacted before much of an aristocracy itself had been formed. The nucleus of this incipient aristocracy was composed, of course, of peers and other titled functionaries ruling the colonies either as proprietary lords or as delegated governors. In miniature they reproduced in America the exclusiveness and pomp of European courts. Revolving around them were groups of officials holding a monopoly of offices and perpetuating themselves in power. Ecclesiastics of the established church were a part of their retinue. A characteristic example will adequately serve to show the lofty ecclesiastical aristocratic tone. In a memorial on the state of religion and the condition of the clergy in Virginia during Sir William Berkeley's administration, the Rev. Morgan Godwyn complained how ministers were handled by "plebeian jundos, the vestries." The members of vestries were usually rich planters who were masters over the poor but had not yet succeeded in being recognized as belonging to the aristocracy.

The ranks of aristocracy, however, were soon widened to include untitled owners of great landed estates and opulent planters. The

transplanting of some features at the foundation of European aristocracy made this inescapable. These features were the laws of entail and primogeniture taken bodily from Europe. By these laws the possession of an estate devolved from generation to generation upon the eldest son and could not be disposed of in cases where by will it was specifically entailed.

Enormous estates of land were obtained by sundry individuals by favoritism or fraud. To a group of titled and other favorites King Charles II granted vast areas in Virginia. They had powers of feudal baronial dominion; they could create manors, hold baronial court, nominate all ministers and pocket fees and emoluments from a variety of sources. Other manorial estates were granted by members of the Virginia Council to themselves or corruptly to others. In the course of a few decades imposing manorial mansions were built. There was Nomini Hall, with its estate of at least 60,000 acres, owned by Robert Carter, called "King" Carter; William Fitzhugh's Chatham Manor overlooking an estate of 54,054 acres; Kenmore Mansion, Blandfield Mansion, Stratford Hall and other Virginia manors all having large estates.

In New York and New Jersey even greater feudal estates were secured or granted. In 1630 the agents of Kilaen Van Rensselaer, an Amsterdam pearl merchant, bought for him from the Indians a tract of land twenty-four by forty-eight miles on the west bank of the Hudson; the price paid was an assortment of duffels, axes, knives and wampum. Other traders obtained great estates, elevating themselves like Van Rensselaer to be Patroons, each having his own flag and insignia and vassals.

A series of vast estates in New York were granted by various captains-general and governors in return for bribes. Of these royal officials Fletcher, "an upstart corrupt governor" (as his successor, the Earl of Bellomont, described him), was the most notorious. In a report to the Lords of Trade, November 28, 1700, Bellomont exposed his corruptions. Fletcher was said to have



received £4,000 in bribes. He confirmed the Van Rensselaer grant; he gave to Robert Livingston an estate sixteen by twenty or twenty-four miles; and even larger estates to other individuals. "I believe," Bellomont wrote to the Lords of Trade, January 21, 1701, "that there are not less than seven millions of acres granted away in thirteen grants." Bellomont succeeded in having only a few of these grants annulled. Each of the remaining estates when partitioned by sale or otherwise was sufficient of itself to form a number of extraordinarily large estates.

Throughout a great part of the eighteenth century royal officials in New York and some other colonies granted extensive estates to themselves or to associates by indirection. To evade the law in New York that not more than 2,000 acres of land could be granted to any settler, Lieutenant-Governor George Clark in 1737 gave 100,000 acres of land ostensibly to a group of men. They, the sequel showed, were simply dummies for himself. The area allowable to any one settler was later reduced to 1,000 acres. In 1768 Governor Sir Henry Moore, by the same fraudulent device, followed by conveyances, gave an estate of 25,000 acres to Sir William Johnson. In turn, a considerable portion of it was transferred to Lord A. Gordon and from him to LeRoy and Bayard whose families became conspicuous members of the aristocracy. Many years later (in 1798 and 1850) when New York State brought suit to void these grants, the courts refused to declare them illegal. In the one case the court made light of the fraud used; in the other it did not controvert charges of fraud but decided that, among other defenses, action was barred by the statute of limitations. These are but a few typical examples of the methods by which estates were obtained in many colonies. Full details are given in the author's "History of the Great American Fortunes" and "History of the Supreme Court of the United States."

It was not so very long before the men securing these estates



set themselves up as personages of lordly powers; their descendants assumed still more the position and airs of aristocrats. They drew a prodigious distinction between themselves and ordinary people whom they were fond of stigmatizing as "the dregs" or "the rabble." Copying the European aristocratic view, they were addicted to depreciating American conditions, sneering at America as "the receptacle of the outcasts from every nation in Europe."

The clothes of each section of society signified its rank at a glance. The man employed at service went about clad in his black hat, homespun brown-colored coat, leather breeches, worsted stockings and heavy shoes with brass buckles. The maid's station was self-expressed by her short huckaback dress, apron, silk neckerchief and cap. A tradesman usually wore coat and waistcoat of plain cloth, often gray trimmed with black, leather breeches, worsted stockings and stout shoes, while his wife's dress was simple chintz.

But a so-styled gentleman radiated splendor of apparel. His square cut coat was of lavender silk or velvet with gold lace and stiffened at the skirts with wire and buckram. His embroidered silk waistcoat had large pockets for massive watch, snuff box and bonbonnière. He wore a wig, dainty cocked hat trimmed with gold lace, point lace cravat, broad black ribbon around the neck, graceful ruffles, golden-fringed gloves. His breeches were of light blue silk or velvet, his stockings of silk, he carried a rapier, his square-toed shoes were ornamented with small silver buckles. Whatever his deficiencies in other respects, his one ambition was to be acclaimed an exquisite in dress. So, too, with the lady with her hooped silk petticoat and tightly laced "stomacher" gaudily ornamented with gold braid; her person clinking with bracelets, necklaces and chains; and after about the middle of the eighteenth century, her "beauty spots." When lady and gentleman traveled

they did so in a damask-covered coach, the successor of the sedan chair.

Echoing the snobbishness of European aristocracy, the rising aristocracy in America looked upon work and trade with contempt. Idleness, with its accompaniment of dissipation, denoted a sure mark of delicacy and high caste. The planters of the South were as much dominated by this view as the grandees of the North. Writing in about the year 1727 on conditions in Virginia, Hugh Jones told how "the common planters, leading easy lives, don't much admire labor, or any manly exercise except horse racing, nor diversion except cock fighting, in which diversion some greatly delight." In the South a gentleman lost caste if he did not gamble profusely and for high stakes. Poor whites and Negro slaves did the work in the South, which, although having some feudal laws, had no such feudal tenantry as existed in New York. The general condition in New England was one of small farms.

## CHAPTER V

### ARISTOCRACY OVERTHROWN

IDEAS had already been proclaimed in America which in time were to bring aristocracy's social code into disrepute and uproot one of the devices by which it perpetuated its political power.

In 1633 a new idea had come from the General Court of Massachusetts, the idea that idleness was neither a worthy nor desirable, but a vicious, demoralizing practice, individually and socially. In declaring it so, the Puritans were actuated partly by religious belief, for to them Satan found his readiest prey in the idle. Nevertheless the idea was put forth and had its cumulative effect, standing as a direct denial that work was menial, ignoble or degrading.

The Massachusetts law of 1633 directed that "no person, householder or other, shall spend his time idly or unprofitably, under pain of such punishment as the Court shall think fit to inflict." From William Penn came later the same idea in a little different form. The twenty-eighth article of his Frame of Government in 1682 provided: "All children within this province of the age of twelve years shall be taught some useful trade or skill, to the end that none may be idle but the poor may work to live and the rich, if they become poor, may not want." Here were the beginnings of the American ideal that work confers usefulness and dignity, and that he who does not render service is a parasite.

Another idea was developed by Bacon's rebellion in Virginia. Seeking to do away with aristocracy of office holders, it declared for rotation in office. Suppressed then, this idea subsequently had the most powerful influence in American political life.

The aristocratic orders derided the American Revolution as an upheaval of the very sediment of the social order. They believed that an overturning of conditions could have no other result than to invert society and cause endless turmoil. One of the things most surprising to aristocracy was the fact that "the rabble," instead of accepting the homespun coat as a sign of meniality which they had long been told that it was, were parading it as a testimonial of honor, progressiveness and patriotism.

With the greatest astonishment, Lieutenant-Governor Cadwalader Colden of New York, writing on February 20, 1775, to Admiral Groves at Boston, narrated how the homespun coat was the badge of the Sons of Liberty "faction." He described the Sons of Liberty as "a set of violent Spirits of the lowest rank and desperate Fortunes, countenanced by a few of Superior Condition who lay hold of every occasion to raise mobs and excite Sedition." Other royal officials or members of the native aristocracy gave repeated expression to their contempt of the revolutionists by such terms as "the riff-raff," "the lowest class of the people," "a set of fierce republicans." Many landed aristocrats voluntarily exiled themselves or openly espoused the monarchical cause; a few having large estates aligned themselves with the people or contrived to keep an effective neutrality hoping to be secure whichever side won. Some were said to have been embittered against the British Government because they could not get titles.

Abolition of some of aristocracy's powers and privileges in law was soon begun. At Thomas Jefferson's initiative in 1776, the Virginia legislature passed a law, although by a majority of only a few votes, prohibiting the entailing of estates. The reason given by Jefferson was: "To annul this privilege, and instead of an aristocracy of wealth, of more harm and danger than benefit to society, to make an opening for the aristocracy of virtue and talent, which nature has wisely provided for the direction of the

interests of society, and scattered with an equal hand throughout all its conditions, was deemed essential to a well-ordered republic." Another act, the product of Jefferson, Pendleton and Wythe, abolishing primogeniture, was passed by the Virginia legislature in 1785.

A year previously the North Carolina legislature had passed an act effacing entail and primogeniture. The preamble set forth these as the reasons: "It was necessary to the spirit and principle of a genuine republic to promote equality of property; therefore all children should receive share and share alike; the old laws had been founded on principles of the European feudal system, and tended only to raise the wealth and importance of particular families and individuals giving them unequal and undue influence." From 1776 to 1787 one State after another passed laws putting an end to entail and primogeniture. France did not abolish these aristocratic powers until 1790.

Many estates in New York, Virginia, and some other colonies were confiscated. They belonged to aristocrats opposing the Revolution or who had fled. But there still remained some large estates and a small yet compact, well-organized party firmly believing in aristocratic ascendancy. It sought the perpetuation of whatever of the old laws it could retain, and schemed for keeping all possible power away from the bulk of the people. Likewise, it aimed to continue distinctions by the use of titles of one kind or another. Early in the Revolution the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* (on July 13, 1776) expressed a popular demand when it called upon all Americans to adopt a simple language of address, abandoning the titles of Excellency and Honorable and satisfying themselves "with beholding our senators, governors and generals rich in real excellence and honor." The Boston *Daily Advertiser* declared a little later that "Americans should have but one denomination—the People."

There was a general deep suspicion of attempts made by be-



lievers in aristocracy to maintain power and distinctions. When a Constitution for Massachusetts was under discussion in 1778, the Boston *Independent Ledger and American Advertiser* made this appeal: "Look, then, that rotation in office be not left out of your Constitution. . . . A few men, continued in the most important places for a succession of years, may so extend their connections and influence as to become *really* though not *openly* masters of the State. Attention! to the accumulation of offices in one man. Nothing is more unreasonable in itself, nothing more contrary to the genius of free government. . . ."

Prevalent suspicions were increased by the establishment of the Order of the Cincinnati. It was viewed and denounced as a concerted aim to establish an hereditary personal distinction for its members. A number of demands were made in 1784 that laws be passed to suppress it.

Aristocracy and its representatives came out openly in the Federal Constitutional Convention. Alexander Hamilton, Gouverneur Morris and some other delegates insisted upon the need of a branch of the government so organized that it would keep the people in check. According to the notes taken by Chief Justice Robert Yates in his book "Secret Proceedings and Debates of the Convention," Hamilton, on June 19, 1787, made this argument: "All communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well-born; the other the mass of the people. The voice of the people has been said to be the voice of God; and, however generally this maxim has been quoted and believed, it is not true in fact. The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right. Give, therefore, to the first class a distinct, permanent share in the government. They will check the unsteadiness of the second, and as they cannot receive any advantage by a change, they therefore will ever maintain good government. Can a democratic assembly who annually revolve in the mass of the people, be supposed steadily to pursue

the public good? Nothing but a permanent body can check the imprudence of democracy. Their turbulent and uncontrolling disposition requires checks. . . ." In similar vein spoke Gouverneur Morris on July 2, 1787. The Senate, he said, should be chosen for life. It "ought to be composed of men of great and established property—an *aristocracy*." It would keep down "the turbulency of democracy," and check the House of Representatives which, "originating from the people, will ever be subject to precipitancy, changeability and excess."

A remarkable feature of this convention was the fact that even delegates opposed to aristocracy did not think of disputing the assertion that an aristocracy meant good government.

As we have shown, the existing aristocracy in America had used the grossest corruption to obtain its properties, and its sway was accompanied by constant discriminations and oppressions. The records abounded with evidences of how aristocracy had bribed its upward way, yet Gouverneur Morris was permitted unchallenged to declaim old aspersions of democracy. In seeking to have a clause in the Constitution restricting suffrage to landholders, he declared: "Give the votes to people who have no property and they will sell them to the rich, who will be able to buy them. . . . The time is not distant when this country will abound with mechanics and manufacturers [sic] who will receive their bread from their employers. Will such men be the secure and faithful guardians of liberty? . . ."

In replying, James Madison did not try to controvert this argument, encrusted with the mold of centuries, that aristocracy was wise, virtuous and pure, and the people ignorant, weak and corrupt. What he did say was that the right of suffrage was one of the fundamental articles of republican government, and that a gradual abridgment of this right had been the mode by which aristocracies had been built upon the ruins of popular forms. Benjamin Franklin reminded the convention that it was princi-

pally the spirit and sacrifices of the common people which had won the Revolution, and that a denial of the right to vote would give these people great uneasiness. Franklin pointed out that the sons of a substantial farmer, not being themselves freeholders (and there were many persons of that class), would not be pleased by such a restriction. The proposal for this limitation was defeated.

If unexplained, the facts of the situation as it was then, would be confusing to modern readers. The democracy of that time was not like the democracy of our own. It was in a swaddling stage, halfway between aristocracy and the so-called common people. Eager to pull down aristocracy of birth and rank it had not yet arrived at the point of giving the vote to the tenant farmer or to the indentured or wage-earning class. It looked for its support "to those of the middling class of life," as its speakers often described the traders, merchants, proprietary farmers and manufacturers. One has only to read the debates in the various State Conventions, called to consider the adoption of the Federal Constitution, to find the fullest evidences of this fact.

Although various aristocratic distinctions remained in law and custom, the Federal Constitution provided that no title of nobility should be granted by the United States, and that no person holding any office should, without the consent of Congress, accept any present, emolument, office or title of any kind whatever from any king, prince or foreign State.

In nearly every State old laws limiting the vote to men having real estate were retained and embodied in the Constitutions. In New York, for forty-five years after the Revolution, a farmer owning \$250 worth of land (which at that time meant a considerable area) could vote for all offices, but a farmer holding only a lease was not a freeholder and could not vote for any office. Were such a law to prevail today many millions of tenant farmers and of rent payers in cities would be entirely deprived

of the right to vote. In the Constitution of 1780 Massachusetts continued property qualifications for voters. In Rhode Island, Connecticut and New Jersey property qualifications remained. Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina, by their Constitutions of 1776, required that any man qualifying as a voter must own fifty acres of land, and South Carolina made the same requirement in its Constitution of 1778. Georgia had a property qualification. Laws in many States made it impossible for a poor man to be elected to any office, high or low. To be elected Governor of Massachusetts called for the possession of an estate of some kind of property worth £1,000; in New Hampshire, an estate worth £500; in North Carolina, a freehold estate valued at £1,000; in South Carolina, £1,500 of property clear of all debts; in Georgia, five hundred acres of land and £4,000. These were all fairly large amounts in an era when a given sum of money had a far greater purchasing power than now. A city family could then live in good style on an annual income of \$750 or \$800. The average wage for men working in factories was a few dollars a week for a twelve-hour day.

Stubbornly resisting at every step, aristocracy had to yield, point by point, to the onrushing of democracy.

The practice of dueling, of which aristocracy boasted as certifying to its fastidious code of honor, was gradually abolished. In 1784 Massachusetts passed an act denouncing dueling as a detestable, infamous and murderous practice based upon false notions of honor. This law ordered the severest penalties for both challenging and dueling, even in cases where death did not result. During the next few decades various other States prohibited dueling, and what law did not do, public opinion did. After the death of Alexander Hamilton in his duel with Aaron Burr in 1804, New York State even went to the extreme of passing a law requiring an oath from every person entering a public office that he would not be concerned in a duel, but



this law was later dropped as superfluous and perhaps fantastic.

Aristocratic pompousness of apparel also began to disappear, flowery elegance giving way to a leveling simplicity. At the end of the eighteenth century it became unfashionable for men to tie and powder their hair, or to wear showy clothes or flash buckles or other ornaments. Short hair and loose dark or black clothes were now the expression of good sense, taste and breeding.

The next blow at aristocracy's laws was the widespread abolition of all suffrage property qualifications. Pennsylvania, since 1770, and New Hampshire, since 1792, had allowed a general right to vote, subject to some minor restrictions only. But the real impetus to the movement to give every white man the vote, irrespective of any qualifications save that of residence, came from the backwoodsmen of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and others of the tier of Middle Western States, then frontier territories. By 1821 there were only four States—New York, North Carolina, Virginia and Rhode Island—in which freehold or real estate property qualifications remained.

In the New York Constitutional Convention of 1821 a bitter controversy was aroused over a proposal to give every man the right to vote. Chief Justice Spencer termed general suffrage "a great, radical, fundamental change which goes to break down a barrier of our constitution." Forth again came the threadbare argument: "Let us, then, take care while we abominate aristocracy, that we do not actually organize it, by giving to the rich an undue influence and by creating venal votes to be bought." Daniel D. Tompkins, who had been Governor of New York, replied: "Property, sir, when compared with other essential rights, is insignificant and trifling. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—not of property—are set forth in the Declaration of Independence as cardinal objects. Property is not even named." And David Buell, Jr., assured the opponents of general suffrage: "Education will save our people from the vices of



European populations. The universal diffusion of information will forever distinguish our population from that of Europe. Virtue and intelligence are the true basis on which every republican government must rest. . . . Property is essential to happiness and ought to have an influence, but so ought talents." He pointed out that until the Revolution the land was in the hands of a few proprietary families, but that because of the abolition of the law of entail and primogeniture it had been rapidly divided and sub-divided until almost the whole community had become interested in one way or another in its protection. The resolution granting general suffrage to all men was adopted by an overwhelming majority. By 1828 Virginia and Rhode Island only retained property qualifications which in these States were also obliterated in later years, although not without a severe contest in Rhode Island.

A mode that had been adopted by some members of the fast-passing aristocracy to assert their vaunted superiority and their disdain for American equality was to expatriate themselves. A number had gone to England where they made themselves acceptable to the aristocracy by belittling America. One of them, Mrs. Anne Grant, wrote a book (published in London in 1808 and the next year in Boston and New York), entitled "Memoirs of an American Lady." She wrote: "Is there a person whose dubious or turbulent character has made him unwelcome or suspected in society, he goes to America, where he knows no one and where he can, with safety, assume any character. . . . With such a heterogeneous mixture a transplanted Briton of the original stock, a true old American, may live in charity but can never assimilate."

Visiting America in 1821, Frances Wright Darusmont, who certainly was a most discerning, frank critic—in fact her views on woman's rights were regarded as revolutionary—was surprised at what she saw. "Here there is no mob," she wrote in her

book, "Views of Society and Manners in America." "An orator or a writer must make his way to the feelings of the American people through their reason." And further in relating the treatment of women: "The prejudices still to be found in Europe, though now indeed somewhat antiquated, which would confine the female library to romances, poetry and belles letters and female conversation, new bonnet and *pas seul* are entirely unknown here. The women are assuming their places as thinking beings. . . . It strikes me that it would be impossible for women to stand in higher estimation than they do here. The deference that is paid to them at all times and in all places has often occasioned me as much surprise as pleasure. . . . No *cavalier servente* of a lady of fashion, no sighing lover who has just penned a sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, ever rendered more delicate attentions to the idol of his fancy than I have seen rendered by an American farmer or mechanic, not to say gentleman, to the companion of his life. . . . In traveling I have myself often met with a refinement of civility from men whose exterior promised only the roughness of the mechanic or working farmer, that I should have looked for from the polished gentleman."

Having for the first time the right to vote, the plain people came forward exultingly in the Presidential campaign of 1828. The real, vital issue in this contest was, as James Parton wrote in his "Life of Andrew Jackson," whether general suffrage was to be carried to its logical conclusion by electing men of the people and fully responsive to popular views. Before this time the college-bred few had maintained dominance in all National, State and city government offices. Sincere democrats as Jefferson and some others were, they nevertheless were of this class. In general, the college educated of that time held themselves as exclusive, looking down upon the ordinary people as of inferior fiber. "How have this class," Parton later wrote, "hugged their gentilities, genealogies, conservatisms and all of the other

antiquated and effeminate nonsense, of which Europe is beginning to be ashamed, and is preparing to cast off as a tawdry and ragged old cloak."

The feeling throughout the United States was intense. Students at Harvard University, old hot-bed of aristocracy,<sup>1</sup> burnt Andrew Jackson in effigy. At this act the New York *Evening Post*, then ordinarily leaning to aristocracy,<sup>2</sup> expressed pained surprise in an editorial on March 3, 1828. "We have known these things to be done by the rabble," it said. But how remarkable that young gentlemen "in whom intellectual cultivation should have produced civilization of manners" should have shown this "strong but coarse and disorderly expression of popular animosity!" Jackson was elected chiefly by the vote of the Middle West and Southwest. When he was inaugurated Justice Story wrote that "the reign of King Mob seemed triumphant."

Now was effected the ousting of one of the last vestiges of the methods of intrenched aristocracy. The principle of rotation in office was jubilantly proclaimed a prime duty and creed of democracy. "For eight and twenty-years," said James Buchanan in a speech on August 15, 1829, "the line of 'safe precedents' had remained unbroken. The supreme magistracy of this country had passed as regularly from the President to his Secretary of State, as the crown of Great Britain descends from father to son. In the mean time there had been few, if any, changes in the subordinate offices at Washington, except such as occurred in the course of nature. Many men had grown gray in office, and their children had been provided for out of the public purse. The people thought it was time to change this order of things." Rotation in office was among the first principles of a republican

<sup>1</sup> Up to the time of the Revolution students at Harvard were enrolled and given precedence in the order of their social rank. Even after the custom was formally dropped, the spirit long persisted.

<sup>2</sup> It ceased to do so when a few years later William Cullen Bryant and William Leggett became its editors.

government, declared the Providence *Phoenix*, on September 5, 1829. "There is no man, however low or however high he may be born, who may not aspire to its highest offices. This is our pride, and this is the worthy object of our laudable ambition."

Imprisonment for debt laws were now expunged from the statutes. These laws, as a Committee of the House of Representatives of Congress reported, were disgraceful evidences of the ingenious subtlety by which they were woven into the legal system adopted from England. "They were obviously intended to increase and confirm the power of a wealthy aristocracy by rendering poverty a crime, and subjecting the liberty of the poor to the capricious will of the rich."

Year after year humanitarians had complained of the bitter injustice of throwing poor debtors in jail and there keeping them for a long time unfed and without adequate clothing or fuel. Charitable societies in some places kept them from dying of starvation or being frozen to death, but many did succumb to rigors, and of what became of their families there is no record.

On December 22, 1791, Governor Mifflin of Pennsylvania sent a message to the Assembly telling how in Philadelphia poor debtors "languish in jail, without clothes, without food and without fire," while those confined for criminal actions "enjoy every supply that is requisite to maintain life." Judge Richard Peters of the United States Circuit Court at Philadelphia sent a similar memorial in 1798 to President John Adams. In New York and other cities poor debtors were subjected to the same treatment. "Our jails are crowded with groups of these victims of misfortune," reported a House of Representatives Committee, February 24, 1821, in denouncing these laws which, it said, had too long stained the annals of America. In 1830 five-sixths of debtors imprisoned in New England jails owed trivial amounts, the majority less than \$20. A report of the managers of the Baltimore jail for the year ended November 26, 1831, showed that of 959



citizens imprisoned for debt, more than one-half owed debts of less than \$10, and only thirty-four of the whole number owed debts exceeding \$100. It was estimated that in the whole country more than 10,000 poor debtors were annually imprisoned. "It is time," said the Boston *Daily Evening Transcript*, on October 25, 1831, "that the people should rise in the majesty of their strength and put down this abomination."

And now that they had the right to vote, this is what the common people insisted should be done without further delay. State after State modified or abolished imprisonment for debt laws, and Congress did the same in the District of Columbia. The reflex of the American democratic movement was felt in England where, after forty years of agitation against the corrupt "rotten borough" methods by which Parliament was elected and controlled, reforms were extorted from the aristocratic class in 1832. In later years Britain followed the American example by abolishing imprisonment for debt.

So great and unprecedented a revolution was the accession of the common people to political power in America regarded in Europe that there was the most enormous curiosity in some countries there to know what kind of people were those Americans who were introducing such radically new ideas and such momentous changes.

Various European writers presented their counts in the indictment: Americans were crude, conceited, boastful, worshipers of money. A few other European writers did try to understand American motives and character. An anonymous article by one of these published in the London (Eng.) *New Monthly Magazine*, in November, 1829, undertook to explain American characteristics. Most travelers, the article said, observed in Americans a strong belief that they were further advanced than Europeans and a solicitude to hear what strangers thought of American institutions and ways—an anxiety seemingly dictated



by a thirst for praise. In these evidences, the writer went on to say, he could not detect any particular weakness or vanity. "The extraordinary progress—the forest converted in the course of a season into a city—are circumstances calculated to cherish a great notion of national superiority; but the chief cause is the readiness with which the inhabitants adopt new inventions. Everything they require is of necessity new; and they judiciously, in consequence, avail themselves of the most recent improvements. Thus it happens that, on inquiry, finding many things in familiar use among them, which Europeans have only heard of in the list of patents, they conceive their knowledge is proportionately advanced in all things. Their anxiety to hear what strangers think of them arises from equal innocence; to know that they are 'progressing,' to use their own phrase, and are curious to ascertain how near they may have approached towards those whom they acknowledge to be before them. I have, however, noticed but few instances in which the question was put with the expectation of flattery. . . ."

Captain Thomas Hamilton, as he wrote in his book "Men and Manners in America," published in 1833, was intensely surprised at the way in which democratic forms had come even in the courts. "Judges and barristers were both wigless and gownless, and dressed in garments of such color and fashion as the taste of the individual might dictate. There was no mace nor external symbol of authority of any sort except the staves which I observed in the hands of a few constables, or officers of the court."

But the old aristocracy was by no means defunct. Some of its members, to evade the intent of the law abolishing primogeniture, preserved their estates by marrying cousins. They, as well as other scions of the large landholding and commercial families, sought to perpetuate caste distinctions by new wealth based upon a monopoly of trade, banks and banking privileges, canal franchises and other incoming forms of financial power. During the

very time they were resisting the demand of the common people for political equality on the ground that the populace would be easily corrupted, they were brazenly corrupting legislatures to give bank charters. Some of the facts were brought out in legislative investigations.

Socially, aristocracy still drew about itself a rarefied, exclusive halo. The "high-toned" residents of Tremont Street, Boston, did not like to be seen in public; those living on Beacon Street and Park Street long and vigorously objected to having benches placed on the Mall because they would have to look at the common folk sitting there or because common folk would be able to gaze at their windows. The "higher classes" in all the cities railed against "mob power." In Philadelphia a rigid system of exclusion was clung to by the self-styled aristocracy; any newcomer trying to enter had a slow, difficult and usually fruitless task.

Aristocracy had again come forward, this time in a new guise. Such was the substance of many a resolution passed by the mechanics, laborers and tradesmen in city ward meetings and by assemblages of farmers in country districts. Never, they declared, would the people consent to become vassals of a moneyed aristocracy. The line was clearly drawn in 1832 between the forces insisting upon a popular government on the one hand, and, on the other, the classes comprising the privileged, the proud, those looking to the past instead of to the future—in brief, the believers in and beneficiaries of aristocracy. The fight against the Bank of the United States was merely one expression of this deep, underlying issue.

To realize conditions then prevailing the American of our time would have to imagine that there was now a class which in addition to wealth claimed an immense assumption of aristocratic airs and which extolled itself as something inherently and infinitely superior to the rest of the people. He would have to imagine the present existence of a class which believed that there

should be an hereditary mass of drudges; a class refusing to acknowledge that those working for a living had any standing or rights whatever. He would further have to imagine a class now declaring that the bulk of men, women and children were fit for nothing else than hard work and seeing nothing wrong in even children toiling in factories twelve hours a day.<sup>3</sup>

Was there ever a country, asked writers and speakers for the popular side, where the claims of aristocracy were more unfounded, absurd and ridiculous? The taking away of hereditary distinctions and the power of perpetuating estates had subjected them to the vicissitudes of chance like any of the ordinary mortals whom they despised. Tomorrow those very aristocrats themselves might be in penury or their posterity in the second or third generation might become so and have to work for a living as did their forefathers.

Down to defeat again went caste aristocracy. In the North it soon ceased to be an effective political force. In New York State, where some manorial feudal rights were still exercised by the owners of great estates, feudal tenures were specifically abolished by provisions in the Constitution of 1846. Until that time there were extant leases in which the tenant was obliged to get permission in writing if he entertained a stranger in his house for a day, and compelling him to buy all articles and commodities at the proprietor's store and grind his flour at the proprietor's mill. Caste aristocracy remained in the South, but there it was of a species largely dependent upon Negro slavery.

How rapidly caste aristocracy was disappearing in the North was shown by the pamphlets published in 1847 and in 1848 giving lists of members of the new aristocracy so-called. But the use of the word aristocracy was a misnomer, a concession to a familiar

<sup>3</sup> In 1832 textile and other mills in New England were run on a twelve-and-a-half hour working schedule. Men's wages averaged \$5 to \$6 a week; children were paid \$1.75 a week. (See Report of U. S. Secretary of the Treasury to the House of Representatives, Ex. Docs. 1st Session, 22nd Congress, 1833.)

term. This new group was in reality a shifting procession of rich men given order of precedence by the amount of wealth each had acquired. The fortunes of some, made in trade and commerce, were somewhat substantial; other rich men sprang up and went down overnight, so to speak, making and losing fortunes by a single speculation or by a series of speculations; some others, enlarging their possessions, laid the foundation for an incoming plutocracy. The era had come when the successful in commerce, trade and transportation boasted of being "self-made men." Caring nothing about pedigree they did know how to exploit the present and capitalize the future, and they often exhibited both a masterful and unscrupulous energy in doing so.

It was common at the time for some American writers to confuse the aims of this pushful, conspicuous set with those of the people at large. "This craving desire for wealth," complained an article on "American Society" in the *Knickerbocker Magazine* in August, 1836, "is the fruitful source of fraud and forgery and of every species of gambling from the wild speculation to the lottery and card table. This lust for gain—this master passion that deadens every other emotion—has spread its baleful influence far and wide throughout our cities." Then the article went on to tell how, after having obtained wealth, the money spender set about copying the motions, manners and fashions drawn from European models; he took his family to Europe that they might "catch the living manners" from seeing titled nobility there. Another article on the same subject in the same magazine in February, 1837, said that fashionable American women had a ludicrous avowed preference for everything foreign; they considered American manufactures, productions and gentlemen as savoring of inferiority, vulgarity and want of gentility; there was an "abject reverence for foreign titles prevalent in our fashionable society."

Of a group this was true then as later, but it had no application



to the American people at large who at that identical period, as we have already seen and as we shall further see, were resolutely eradicating ideas and institutions derived from the Old World, and establishing new ideas and activities strikingly different from those prevailing elsewhere.

This was fully acknowledged by later articles (in July and October, 1839) in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*. "Here," one of them said, "are no feudal privileges, no prescriptive rights to fetter and restrain the industry and enterprise of her sons. Here are no monopolies of wealth and station, but their avenues, open to all honorable competition, keep in action the physical and intellectual energies of a whole people; and the humblest citizen may successfully aspire to the highest honors a nation can bestow. Here are no casuists, armed with the secular power, to aid in convincing the minds of men that a conformity with the system of religious faith that may be denominated national is essential to the happiness and the safety of the State. . . ."

Those acquiring great wealth well knew that the American people did not intrinsically value any man because of selfish amassing. And so one after another of the rich felt obliged to prove concern for the public good by benefactions for public libraries, colleges, hospitals and other institutions. The whilom aristocrat thought of nothing but personal and family aggrandizement; the force of public opinion influenced the new so-called aristocrat to be a philanthropist.

"So well established is the custom of liberality," said the *North American Review*, in October, 1848, "that very wealthy people are in a manner constrained to make large bequests for public objects in their wills; and if one occasionally fails to comply with the general expectation in this respect, his memory incurs such obloquy that sometimes his heirs have been shamed into an attempt to atone for his neglect." This was part of a reply to John Stuart Mill's jibe at America as a land where "the life of



one sex is devoted to dollar hunting and of the other to the breeding of dollar hunters."

In England, the *North American Review* article further pointed out, the founder of a fortune wanted to entail it to his family to be held inalienably, but an American "is much more likely to covet immediate applause and the transmission of his name with honor to posterity through the endowment of a public institution or the furtherance of some scheme of general utility. . . . We do not tolerate gold lace, nor cocked hats, nor footmen with powdered heads and gold-headed canes. . . . The most natural and sensible way of deriving personal gratification from newly-acquired wealth and of making a show of it in the eyes of the world is to give largely to public charities. The sums which are contributed here by individuals for the support of schools, colleges, churches, missions, hospitals and institutions of science and beneficence, put to shame the official liberality of the oldest and wealthiest governments in Europe."

A pamphlet addressed to the working people of the United States was published in 1840 by the workingmen of Charlestown, Massachusetts. Political democracy, it announced, would never satisfy the popular mind; political democracy was accepted only as a means to social democracy, meaning equality in social conditions. When that pamphlet was written there were still evidences of some disparities in apparel betokening differences in social condition. But now survey a crowd in any American city; all are well, even fastidiously dressed and it is difficult to tell, from outward indications at least, to what group or class anybody belongs. Successively the American people have shorn aristocracy of every distinction; the possession of great wealth still carries economic power but confers no actual distinction.

The manipulations by which, after the Revolution, aristocracy kept some exercises of political power remote from popular control have been in great part remedied by the American people by

---

a series of changes ending so far in the primary, initiative and referendum. The old aristocratic conception of master and servant, persisting in one form or another in court interpretations and decisions, was definitely set aside by the Federal (Clayton) Anti-Trust Act of 1914 which specifically defined that labor was not a commodity. When nearly a century and a half ago the American people declared titles and coats of arms anachronisms to be discarded, Europe scoffed at the idea that any country could get along without an established aristocracy. Just as a long line of republics has followed the creation of the American Republic, so has the abolition of titles become increasingly general not only in republics but in countries nominally under imperial rule. During the World War the Canadian Parliament, for example, passed a resolution the practical effect of which was to forbid further granting of titles to any Canadian. We also read that whereas the number of coats-of-arms displayed in England in 1880 was 252,000, it was only 39,315 in 1923. By the expedient of the armorial-bearing tax, coats-of-arms, long considered a prime necessity on coach doors and the backs of envelopes, are there being reduced to a minimum.

## CHAPTER VI

### FIRST BLOWS AT MONOPOLY OF LEARNING

"HERETOFORE, and at present to a certain extent, learning has ever belonged to a few, constituting a single class of society which was, of course, the repository of all moral and intellectual power. And these few, having the power in their own grasp, moulded and wielded the destinies of society. Now this principle of universal mental cultivation destroys this usurping, tyrannizing system. It takes from the few the power of holding and disposing of the rights of the many, giving to the many the same mental superiority and knowledge. The promotion of the general well-being of society by a cultivation of the heart and intellect is impliedly required of Americans, from the nature and structure of our government."

The foregoing extract from the *Southern Literary Messenger*, issue of May 1, 1836, is a typical illumination of the spirit of the American people after they had shattered three antiquated systems which in reality had long operated as an interlinked unity. These old systems were: The calculated discouragement by monarchs of the enlightenment of peoples; the demand of ecclesiasticism that it have unquestioned authority to shape such schooling as did exist; the insistence of the aristocracy that those occupying a lowly station should not be educated.

In place of these systems the American people established the principle that every child was by right entitled to the benefits of an education and that the responsibility to supply the opportunity devolved upon the community. This was the fourth great accomplishment of the American people and the most original.

Quite true, there had been certain free schools in various Euro-

pean countries. But they were special institutions provided for by private charity, churches and religious orders, industrial guilds and, in some cases, by the municipalities. Reaching but a fragment of the population they vouchsafed education as a privilege; to give it as an inherent right was an undreamt-of principle. Their teaching was of a kind requiring the approval of sovereigns, prelates and ruling classes, and, it is needless to add, had to accord with prevailing ideas, doctrines and policies. Holland, in the seventeenth century, held the distinction of being the best-schooled country in Europe, but its schools did not in any sense emanate from the people.

The development of the American principle was gradual. The first schools were modeled upon European lines; the chief motive was to inculcate the established creed or rear students for the ministry. The records of the Virginia Company show that on May 26, 1619, a proposition which King James I had already approved, came up to build a college in Virginia "for the training and bringing up of infidels' children to the true knowledge of God and understanding of righteousness"; about £1,500 had already been contributed to this "pious work."

The main purpose of the Massachusetts laws of 1635 and 1646 was to educate students for the ministry.

In referring to "the necessity and singular use of good literature in managing the things of the greatest concernment in the commonwealth," the law of 1646 meant the Bible principally. This aim was amplified by the Massachusetts Colony law of 1647, making it an indictable offense for townships not to establish and maintain schools. "It being one chief project of Satan to keep men from a knowledge of the Scripture," the preamble to this law explained, as also "that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers." Every township having fifty householders was ordered to appoint a teacher who had to prove orthodoxy of faith. Plymouth Colony and Connecticut laws were

parallels or almost exact imitations of those in Massachusetts. The Connecticut code of 1650 emphasized the fact that good education was imperative to a commonwealth and declared ignorance was barbarism; it ordered town selectmen, under penalty of a fine, to see to it that children were at least taught how to read the English tongue and the capital laws of the colony.

These schools were not public schools in the modern sense, yet in a limited degree they were public institutions. Tuition fees collected from parents or guardians were the regular means of sustaining them, but the laws did contain a provision that in cases where parents or masters of apprentices could not contribute towards paying the teacher's wages, the inhabitants in general had to do so. In Plymouth Colony there was adopted a law, repeated in 1674 by consent of the majority of the freemen, that all profits from the Cape Cod fishery be appropriated for maintaining of grammar schools. Another Plymouth Colony law, enacted in 1677, set forth that "the maintainance of good literature doth much tend to the advancement of the weal and the flourishing estate of societies and Republics." This law provided for the support of grammar schools in four ways: by allowing individual contributions, by tuition fees, by taxing residents of all towns having more than fifty families, and by a distribution of the profits from the Cape Cod fishery.

In 1674, 1676, 1677 and 1683 various laws were passed in Massachusetts and in Connecticut fining any town not establishing one or more grammar schools according to population. The intent of the Massachusetts law of 1674 was to have a sufficient number of youths eligible for college. Harvard College had been established as a sectarian institution in 1650, receiving frequent gifts of public money and land. Yale College at New Haven was also founded by a group of clergymen to preserve orthodoxy. The practice increased of giving grants of public land for schools; in 1672, for example, Connecticut gave 600 acres each to the



towns of New Haven, Hartford, New London and Fairfield. It made more grants in 1679, and a few years later passed a law forever exempting from taxation any lands or houses donated for school purposes. Law after law was passed in New England either along these lines or elaborating schemes of public taxation to make up for any lack caused by insufficiency of funds derived from tuition fees.

Then and for a long subsequent period public schools were variously regarded by the different classes or faiths. Aristocrats, or those pretending in any way to an approach to aristocracy, scorned the public school, sending their children to private schools. Parents whose religious beliefs differed from the established creed would not allow their children to go to public schools surcharged with the atmosphere of a particular creed. And, in general, public schools were looked upon by poor parents or guardians as a species of public charity, the acceptance of which implied the open humiliation of acknowledging poverty. Too often did the children of those paying tuition fees taunt poor children with the charge of being paupers because they received instruction at public expense, and sometimes teachers, when they became angry at a poor student, did not restrain themselves from the same scoffing. In Pennsylvania, where the issue of creed was not injected, a better spirit prevailed. William Penn's concern for education was solely "to prevent wicked and scandalous living and that youth may be successively trained up in virtue and useful knowledge and arts"; therefore, the thirteenth article of his Preface to his Frame of Government provided for "a committee of manners, education and arts." But Quakers set little value on higher education; to them classic languages were incongruous and heathenish.

Legislative bodies were exceedingly surprised at the failure of the public schools to do nearly as well as was expected. A Connecticut law of 1700 expostulated against the practice of many families in allowing "young barbarians to grow up in their midst

who could not read the Holy Word of God and the good laws of the Colony." Laws were passed establishing some free schools, thus named because they were composed exclusively of pupils whose parents, guardians or masters did not have to pay tuition fees. Here children were first to be taught to read the psalter, and then instructed in writing, arithmetic and the Latin and the Greek languages. The schoolmasters were to be chosen by the magistrates, and each was to receive an annual salary of £60. Such laws as these, however, only accentuated the visible difference between children attending schools where tuition fees were paid and those going to the free schools, often termed pauper schools. These distinctions were manifested, although not so acutely, among the Quakers in Pennsylvania when, in 1697, they established a free school.

In New York (then New Netherland) the Dutch rulers neglected schools; the Patroons deliberately opposed them. The few schools were parochial affairs run by the Dutch Reformed Church. After the English conquest, New York was little better situated. Until 1805, in fact, there were hardly any but Church of England parochial and private schools in New York City. An act had been passed in 1732, and reënacted, "to encourage a public school in the City of New York for teaching Latin, Greek and Mathematiks."<sup>1</sup> This school came into existence promoted by some rich patrons of British extraction. The people liked neither the idea of patronization nor charity; a writer of the times narrated that "an instructor could not find bread from the voluntary contributions of the inhabitants." No doubt the opposition of the Dutch to English schools had some influence in producing this aloofness. But the most important factor in New York as elsewhere was the fear of self-respecting parents that the stigma

---

<sup>1</sup> The preamble to this act was singularly phrased: "Whereas, the youth of this Colony are found, by manifold experience, to be not inferior in their natural genius to the youth of any other country in the world, therefore, be it enacted," etc.

of pauperism would be attached to themselves and their children. Some parents let their children grow uneducated; others pinched themselves to the utmost deprivation to give their children the benefit of a private school course. Not that many of the private schools anywhere were good. Most were run irresponsibly by unregulated tutors solely to make money, and the education imparted was of superficially "polite" kind. Nevertheless attendance at them gave prestige.

The antagonism of the poor to charity and of dissenters to coercion had been markedly shown in South Carolina when, by an act passed in 1710, a free school initiated by charitable contributions had been created to teach some subjects and also the tenets of the established church. It was boycotted by both poor and dissenters.

Of all the colonies the body of the people of North Carolina were perhaps the last to accept with docility any attempt to slur poverty or force creed. Most of them, as we have pointed out in an earlier chapter, were either poor debtors or others classed under the severe laws of England as malefactors who had fled to America. Having suffered from the oppressions of authority they had little regard for anything it said or did. Captain-General and Governor Gabriel Johnston of North Carolina was, unlike his predecessors, neither a drunkard nor an ignoramus. He had been a professor in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. But even his urgings in 1736 to have schools established produced no effect. Arthur Dobbs, a successor as Captain-General and Governor of North Carolina, suggested, in 1753, the providing of a fund to support a number of clergymen for the instruction of the people but it was to be done "in such a prudent manner without Tythes, as to prevent Contests, and preserve a harmony betwixt the Clergy and the Laity."

"Despised by the rich and shunned by the poor." This was the way in which the first American public schools were later epit-

omized by an educator. American poverty, he wrote further, was not lacking in feelings of pride and independence; and a bounty, coupled with degrading conditions, was not considered a benefaction.

All of the colleges established in America were nurseries of aristocratical prejudices. William and Mary College in Virginia was started in 1690 with a royal bounty of £20,000 and 20,000 acres of land, and was maintained by general taxation. King's College (now Columbia University) in New York City was established by contributions from the rich, supplemented by donations from Trinity Church and the legislature, and its policy was dominated by a combination of rich men and ecclesiastics. Princeton College, New Jersey, and other colleges were avowedly aristocratic. When the trustees of Princeton College in their frequent addresses spoke of education it was of "genteel education"; in referring to the mass of people it was of the "uninformed multitude"; their conception of a free government was a "polished" government, meaning, to be sure, government by aristocracy of learning.

Both during and after the Revolution the colleges were eager to welcome either open or insidious defense of aristocracy. In a sermon before the governor and the legislature of Connecticut, on May 8, 1783, the Rev. Ezra Stiles, D.D., President of Yale College, speaking on the theme "The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor," said (as reported in Thornton's book "The Pulpit of the American Revolution"): "We stand a better chance with aristocracy, whether hereditary or elective, than with monarchy. An unsystematical democracy and an absolute monarchy are equally detestable. . . . An elective aristocracy is preferable for America. . . ."

The ideas of the aristocratic class in America on the subject of popular education were not precisely like those of Frederick the Great and other kings of Prussia but they had some points sub-

stantially in common. Writing to Minister von Zedlitz in 1779 Frederick the Great informed that functionary: "It is sufficient in the flat country [Northern Germany] if the people can read and write a little; for if they know too much, they rush off to the cities and want to become secretaries or clerks, etc. . . ." King Frederick William III believed, as his circular order of August 31, 1799, showed, that beyond a certain point education for the masses was very dangerous; he feared that a too expansive course of instruction would awaken the latent abilities of men of the lower classes and arouse them to demand a higher social position. In 1809, after Napoleon had conquered Prussia, a new organization of schools was begun to arouse patriotism and crystallize servility to the king.

When nearly half a century later, the Factories Bill, with its educational features, was first before the British House of Commons, the Prussian system of schooling was discussed. Progressive British newspapers denounced Prussian teaching methods as not only designed to produce but as actually producing a spirit of blind acquiescence to arbitrary power, spiritually and temporally; in brief as a system of education to enslave and not to enfranchise.



## CHAPTER VII

### CLASS GRIP UPON EDUCATION BROKEN

FROM the contest waged by the mass of the American people against ecclesiasticism, monarchy and aristocracy two new principles of education were developed. The first was that to be successful a republican form of government must have as its basis the intelligence and virtue of its citizens. The other principle, a necessary outgrowth of the first, held that the State should adequately provide for the education of all children without distinction.

As a general proposition the first of these principles was opposed more by aristocracy's interposing the deadweight of inertia than by militantly combating it. But over the second principle there was a long, bitter conflict. The spirit of both aristocracy and of rising industrial capitalism was rancorously against any introduction of general education to be supported by the whole people. As a class, the rich scouted the proposal to send their children to associate with those of the poor, and furiously maintained that they should not be obligated to help pay for schools to which, they protested, they would not consign their children. In particular, the owners of factories, employing very young children, were unwilling to endorse a system inevitably depriving them of a source of labor supply.

Opponents of popular education were powerless, however, against the outpouring of declarations that education of the entire people was a prime duty of the community.

Some of these resolutions embodied a recognition of the class divisions of that era. The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, enlarging upon education, declared that it was essential to spread

its opportunities and advantages in the various parts of the country and "among the different orders of the people." For the preservation of their rights and liberties, wisdom, knowledge and virtue should be generally diffused, this Constitution ordered. It was therefore declared to be the duty of Massachusetts legislatures and magistrates in all future periods, "to cherish the interests of literature and the sciences and all seminaries of them, especially the University of Cambridge." Further it should be their duty to provide "for public schools and grammar schools in the towns; to encourage private societies and public institutions with rewards and immunities for the promotion of agriculture, arts, sciences, commerce, trades, manufactures, and a natural history of the country; to countenance and inculcate the principles of humanity and general benevolence, public and private charity, industry and frugality, honesty and punctuality in their dealings, sincerity, good humor, and all social affections and generous sentiments among the people."

In New York, Governor George Clinton reminded the legislature that, inasmuch as piety and virtue were generally the offspring of an enlightened understanding, it was important to encourage institutions of learning. "Under other forms of government," said President John Dickinson of Pennsylvania, in a speech to the judiciary on October 8, 1785, urging the establishment of the public schools, "the administration may be well conducted if the chief magistrates are good. But in republics where the people themselves are to govern, their virtue is essential to their prosperity." In all of the States the same sentiments were iterated and reiterated, becoming incontestable maxims.

The men and bodies making these declarations well knew that the moral weight, great as it was, of such pronouncements was ineffective if not reinforced by practical provision.

"Religion, morality and knowledge," read a resolution adopted

by the Continental Congress in 1783, "being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged." Jefferson, Madison, Duane and some other members having advanced ideas, made convincing arguments that government, as the organ of society, had the right to provide means for general education and would be derelict should it not do so. The ordinance of May 20, 1785, followed by that of July 23, 1787, reserved perpetually for public school support and endowment 640 acres of land in every township in the territory northwest of the Ohio River. As fast as each territory was admitted as a State it received full control over the allotted lands within its boundaries. This far-sighted policy of reserving portions of the public lands for public schools was continued in the case of each successive territory; in the grant of Oregon Territory later the area given was doubled.

At the same time—in 1787—Congress provided for the establishment of State universities to be controlled by the people as distinct from existing private universities dominated by the policies and views of cliques of ecclesiastics and rich men. Congress gave two complete townships, each of 46,800 acres, in each of the Western territories for the perpetual support of universities. Some of the newer States obtained more than this area for university support. The total of Government grants for schools, agricultural colleges and universities amounted by 1883 to at least 79,000,000 acres. By 1917 the area thus granted reached approximately 116,222,000 acres.

Simultaneously, many of the original States, owning varying large areas, made extensive gifts of land for educational purposes.

Universities were actually established before a general public school system; in many instances they long preceded it. To our times this seems to have been a reversal of the order of construction; it was a natural, appropriate procedure to the

legislators of that era. According to their view the future administrators of the American Republic would be members of legislatures and of the courts and of the learned professions in general. That being so, it was deemed highly inadvisable that there should be any excuse left for them to study in European countries where they would imbibe ideas contrary to those developing in America.

The legislature of Georgia was one of the bodies expressing this aim when it passed an act giving 40,000 acres of land for the University of Georgia. The preamble to the act of 1785 explained that sending youth to other countries for their education was not a good plan for American purposes, and "is too humiliating an acknowledgment of the ignorance or inferiority" of American institutions. To have American youth study abroad "will always be the cause of so great foreign attachments, that upon principles of policy it is inadmissible."

New York State created a university long before it established public schools, although public lands, by the act of 1789, had been set aside for both. Likewise Indiana which founded Vincennes University in 1807, and did not enact a general school law until 1824. So, too, Kentucky which in 1798 gave public lands to a number of academies and seminaries, yet did not adopt its first law for a general system of common schools until 1838. The same policy was carried out by some other States.

All of the State governors who were committed to the progress of democracy kept urging legislatures to lose no time in providing a system of common school education.

Governor Clinton of New York did so in 1803, and Governor Lewis of New York demanded in 1804 that "common schools, under the guidance of respectable teachers, should be established in every village, and the indigent should be educated at the public expense."

The reflection in the last part of this sentence tends to explain



why many poor people were apathetic about education. They did not like to be reminded of their poverty or accept anything tendered in a patronizing spirit. To them, any plan, no matter how laudable the motive, perpetuating class distinctions was obnoxious. In Massachusetts, where officials showed the greatest anxiety if a single child escaped schooling, there were hundreds of children many of whose parents would not send them to the charity schools. Nor was the fact palatable to the poverty-stricken that school attendance was under the supervision of the Overseers of the Poor—a contact implying the degradation of pauperism.

To make clear how the sensibilities of the poor were constantly hurt, it is only necessary to quote one of the many well-meaning but aspersive official declarations.

Replying to a message from Governor John Brooke, June 1, 1819, the Massachusetts State Senate stated: "It is a source of satisfaction to learn that successful efforts are making to diminish the mass of pauperism and vice. Charity schools, founded on new and enlarged modes of instruction, have brought down the elements of education within the reach of multitudes of mendicants; and their operation has been so efficacious as to reclaim a neglected populace from the waste of ignorance and crime to lead to the manufactory and the field those who would otherwise become tenants of the prison." The reply of the House of Representatives was in the same vein of animadversion. The Pennsylvania law of 1809 was entitled "An Act to provide for the education of the poor, gratis." The Quakers, a few years later, established the Philadelphia School Society.

Added to the opposition of the rich and the resentment of the poor, another factor hindered in some places the development of a popular educational system. A part of the population of such a city as New York was composed of immigrants many of whom had never had an education. Some did not see its value to their



children. New York State, in 1805, gave the net proceeds of a half million acres of vacant unappropriated lands for a school fund. But years passed before a school system was established. To provide schooling and to teach parents the duty of having their children instructed, the New York Free School Society was organized in 1805, and opened its first school in 1809.

"While magnificent colleges and universities are erected and endowed and dedicated to literature, we behold few liberal appropriations for diffusing the blessings of knowledge among all descriptions of people," said DeWitt Clinton, in an address on that occasion. "The fundamental error of Europe has been to confine the light of knowledge to the wealthy and great, while the humble and depressed have been as sedulously excluded from its participation as the most wretched criminal immured in a dungeon is from the light of heaven. This cardinal mistake is not only to be found in the institutions of the Old World and in the condition of its inhabitants but it is to be seen in most of the books which have been written on the subject of education. . . . More just and rational views have been entertained on this subject in the United States. Here no privileged orders, no factitious distinctions in society, no hereditary nobility, no established religion, no royal prerogatives exist to interfere barriers between the people and to create distinct classes in society. All men being considered as enjoying equality of rights, the propriety and necessity of dispensing, without distinction, the blessings of education followed as a matter of course."

One of the first moves to abolish class distinctions in public schools came from Indiana, the legislature of which, in 1821, appointed a committee to report upon a system of education. This committee was particularly instructed to guard against "any discrimination between rich and poor." The Indiana general school law of 1824 was the result. Governor Allen Trimble of Ohio reported in his annual message on December 9, 1828,

that the establishment of the common school system in Ohio had been acceptable to a majority only, "a respectable minority having yielded reluctantly to the partial operation of the law." He added: "It is most gratifying, however, to know that wherever the system has been carried into effect, its benefits have been felt and acknowledged; and prejudices long entertained upon the subject are yielding to the influence of reason and experience."

Rhode Island which in 1800, "to contribute to the greater equality of the people" had passed an act for free schools and, at the instance of the rich had repealed it three years later, now—in 1828—passed an act establishing common schools.

It was the adoption of manhood suffrage—giving every man the right to vote—which was instrumental in eventually abolishing the distinctions between the child paying for tuition and the child who went to the public charity school. Throughout the country there was a swelling demand that all children be put on an equality. In New York City, where the discriminatory system long continued, there were, in 1828, according to an address of the trustees of the Public School Society, an estimated 24,200 children between five and fifteen years of age who did not attend any school whatever. A large number of children, the address said, were taken away from school when fourteen years and even when twelve and ten years old to be put to work. With few exceptions, the rich, especially those educated in "select schools," everywhere disparaged and obstructed both the common public school and the proposal for compulsory education. But not much more so than some persons styling themselves educators who were either influenced by old ideas or who were benumbed into inaction by the formidable, seemingly hopeless prospect of educating an entire people.

A new doctrine now advocated attained such an ascendancy that it generally became irresistible. This was the doctrine that

universal education indissolubly accompanied universal suffrage (as it was then termed). In differing phraseology various newspapers stressed this point: "Now that we have free, universal suffrage, can it be doubted that the means of a common education should be co-extensive with this right?" Heretofore, education for the children of the very poor had been recommended largely upon the ground that such a course tended to protect society from the nurture of vice and crime. Even DeWitt Clinton, democratic humanitarian as he was, had advanced this view. So had Daniel Webster when he declared it the duty of government to provide education as a police precautionary measure so as to shape popular currents against immorality and crime and thus insure "a security over the law and beyond the law in the prevalence of enlightened and well-principled moral sentiment."

Now, however, executives of many States and other public officials and numerous lecturers began to proclaim that the future rulers of the American Republic would be those very lads perhaps sunk in poverty or the urchins roaming the streets, and that it was the paramount mission of the nation to afford them full educational advantages.

Governor John Collins of Delaware had an odd mixture of ideas in his message of January 1, 1822. He contended that schools should be supported chiefly by voluntary contributions because "that is rarely much prized which costs little," and if education was offered as a free gift it might be neglected. The fact that members of the community paid taxes indirectly as well as those paying directly was then obscured as a principle of political economy. Governor Collins was one of those slow in seeing that the self-respecting poor did not value anything denominated a gift. But he did express great indignation that not even primary schools existed in Delaware. "No subject can be presented to your minds," he told the legislature, "of greater importance or more general concern than that of devising the

best practical means of promoting the education of the great body of the people of this State. . . . The value of education is too great and too obvious to be illustrated. Upon it depends the intellectual, moral and religious character of the community."

In Ohio, Governor Trimble sought to arouse the legislature to the realization that it was the interest and duty of every member of society to promote the education of youth. "For all must be sensible that where universal suffrage prevails, universal instruction should accompany it. Indeed, the latter should precede the former; for there can be no safe depository of public liberty where general intelligence and public virtue do not exist." A later Governor of Ohio—Robert Lucas—told the Ohio legislature that the reason why the American people legislated for the education of the people so badly was because the subject was a new one in the history of the world and therefore there was little instruction to be gained from past experience.

The Ohio Senate Journal contains a lecture on common schools given by S. Lewis of Cincinnati, at the Education Convention at Columbus, Ohio, on January 13, 1836. "Other nations," he said to the educators, "have hereditary sovereigns; and one of the most important duties of their governments is to take care of the education of the heir to the throne; *these children all about your street* [sons of immigrants] *who cannot even speak your language, are your future sovereigns*. Is it not important that they be well educated? All nations are looking on at our experiment; individuals bid us God speed; but every court in Europe would rejoice to see us do as they have long prophesied we must do, viz., dissolve in anarchy. . . . Establish common schools and sustain them well, and you will most assuredly fix a place where all classes will in childhood become familiar, before the influence of pride, wealth or family can bias the mind."

Municipalities were refusing to sanction the appropriation of



public funds for any kind of privately controlled schools. Their objection was that class distinctions would be provoked. When, in 1831, the trustees of the Mechanics' School applied to the Board of Aldermen of New York City for an appropriation, the law committee of the lower branch of that body (the Board of Assistant Aldermen) reported on September 19, 1831, that such an ordinance would be unconstitutional in contravening the provision for common schools.

"A school to be common," the report said, "ought to be open to all. . . . No school can be common unless parents of all religious sects, Mohammedans and Jews as well as Christians, can send their children to it, to receive the benefits of an education without doing violence to their religious belief. . . . The Mechanics' School [founded for the children of the members of the Mechanics' Society] is exclusive in its character, and is calculated to divide society into classes and grades contrary to the spirit of our Constitution and Government. The division of society into grades, even for the purpose of education, would be productive of the most fatal consequences. An odious distinction will early be instilled into the minds of children, and the division lines of classes of society will be more sharply drawn than they have ever been under the most despotic governments of Europe. Children will then regard themselves as belonging to a particular rank in life, which will give rise to jealousies, calculated to disturb the harmony and the present arrangement of society."

The drafters of this report wrote with much feeling; at that very time the Workingmen's Party was denouncing the existing anomaly of pay schools and free or charity schools. According to the Workingmen's Advocate of May 1, 1830, nearly half the children in New York City did not go to school because their parents could not pay tuition fees or would not take the bounty of the Free School Society. The *Mechanics' Magazine*,



in August, 1833, stated that 80,000 children remained unschooled in New York State.

In reviewing this period, a report issued by the Board of Education in 1854, related how even when the Free School Society changed its name to the Public School Society and adopted a more liberal policy, the experiment still proved unsuccessful. "Finding that both the free system and the pay system, when kept up as a charity," said this report, "were unpalatable to American feelings, the Society could not fail to see foreshadowed to them a better system by which the property of the city could be compelled to educate the people, and public instruction, freed from every odor of charity, being the right of all, would be gladly acceptable to all."

By a series of legislative acts a common school system based upon equality, supported wholly by public taxation, and administered by officials elected by the people, was established in one State after another. In New York City, when the question of this new system was submitted in 1850 to a popular vote it was sustained by a vote of 39,075 to 1,011—a majority of nearly forty to one. Three years later the Public School Society voluntarily surrendered its property to the City of New York. In Rhode Island there was great alarm in 1843 when it was revealed that of a population of 108,830 more than 1,600 adults could not read or write. At the same time, Connecticut with a population of 309,978 had only 526 illiterates, and Massachusetts still less proportionately. The Rhode Island legislature quickly passed a bill for a better equality school system, appointing Henry Barnard as its administrator.

Discriminations in providing education gradually became obsolete in all of the Northern and Western States. "Our public schools," said the seventh biennial report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of Illinois, "are patronized equally by the rich and the poor, with no distinctions among those who attend

them save those equally attainable by all, of moral and intellectual worth." The Southern States in general were backward if not sluggish and hostile in educational matters—a condition of which advanced minds there strongly complained, usually in vain. *De Bow's Review*, published at New Orleans, reported in 1846 a speech made by Mr. Eustis in the Louisiana legislature lamenting that every year children in that State took away \$200,000 wherewith to get education elsewhere. But, the January, 1846, issue of *De Bow's Review* exulted: "New Orleans has discarded mere charity schools forever, and adopted the true system of common schools. It has attained a proud eminence in this respect among Southern cities. No city can advance to any elevation without providing the means of developing the minds of its growing population."

Education was one of the foremost of the dominating themes in American life and was acted upon with wonderful enthusiasm. Professor Frank W. Blackmar, in his monograph on schools in Kansas, narrated how the great majority of the settlers of Kansas were in favor of the education of all classes of people. "Before they had become well settled in their new homes, almost before their first crop had been harvested from the prairie sod, or before suitable houses had been built for shelter, they began to talk of schools and the education of their children." Of Iowa, Professor Leonard F. Parker wrote that wherever a little settlement was made, the schoolhouse was the first united act of the settlers. The same description applied to Minnesota and other territories. One of the earliest acts of the legislature of Oregon Territory was to establish a common school fund (for which Congress had provided 500,000 acres of land in 1841) and a common school system. "It is a fact worthy of sincere and heartfelt congratulation," said the annual message of Governor John Bigler to the legislature of California, January, 1856, "that although as late as January 8, 1852, . . . we had no system of

common schools, and were not possessed of a dollar of school funds we can now boast of a system scarcely inferior to any of our sister States and a fund in the treasury of over half a million . . . and not less than seven million acres of public lands—constituting a rich heritage inviolably devoted to educational purposes.”

The first schoolhouses in the newly settled territories were log cabins or clapboard shanties. In them a mass of children were given the first elements of education. To an unsympathetic observer these makeshift buildings, cold in winter and hot in summer, and equipped with rough benches, did not excite admiration. But to the settlers they had a lofty significance, standing as an inspiring symbol of the hopes and ideals of a people determined first of all to impart enlightenment. No dream was it that from those diminutive, crude schoolhouses would issue legions of youth trained to an exaltation of intellect joined with a sturdy democratic simplicity of manners. The operation of the educational system itself was often faulty, if not positively defective, the realization of which aroused the keenest effort to improve it.

This great, unprecedented educational movement, as well as some other movements, went on in the United States simultaneously with the huge undertaking of opening up vast primitive areas, constructing factories and railroads, creating towns and cities. So much bustle did this utilitarian work make that not only foreign nations but even some Americans were misled into the delusion that America was wholly immersed in an unrestrained worship of material objects. The error here again lay in seeing the obtrusive and spectacular only, and in accepting the acts of a conspicuous group as those of the American people. While capitalists were vaingloriously directing attention to their accomplishments and wealth, there came from one after another American educator the true expression of the innermost feelings

of a great portion of the American people. This expression was set forth in many an official report, speech and address. Couched in a variety of diction its purport was the same and to this effect:

“The noblest end of human effort is the development and elevation of man himself. The direct and enormous influence of our public schools upon the great body of the people is lifting our Northern and Western commonwealths to a higher plane of intelligence and power than civilization has ever hitherto beheld. We invite the gaze of the nations upon this achievement.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### CULTURE A NATION'S GOAL

THE momentum of the American educational movement now swept it to accomplishments which the people, in their most sanguine expectations, had not thought so quickly possible.

The creation of a system of common schools was only the first step in the determination of the American people to efface class distinctions in every way practicable. There still remained an altogether disproportionate number of private schools competing with the common schools. How were they to be discouraged and reduced? Seth P. Beers, Superintendent of Common Schools of Connecticut, in his annual report on May 5, 1846, was one of those vigorously pointing out the effective way. He remonstrated against the "existence of numerous private schools of the same grade as common schools; and the patronage of the former by the educated and wealthy to the neglect of the latter." He also complained of "the employment of cheap instead of well-qualified teachers" in the public schools. The remedies he proposed became increasingly the firm object of the American people pursued with a tenacity allowing no consideration of expense to stand in the way. "Make the common school the best school! Pay higher compensation to induce good teachers to remain in the same place! Give model schoolhouses with playgrounds!"

The most urgent problem was the supplying of teachers. In the earlier periods teachers in public schools were chiefly men. By no means unfrequently they were untrained, shifty characters dawdling at some occupation part of the year and taking up teaching as an easy alternative. Other men responsible but



equally without training took up teaching when they could not get work at their regular vocation. Teachers in private schools had so long catered to the rich and acted the part of servitors that in general the teacher had a low standing in the community, even in the newer States where the people were not weighted with prejudices still lingering in the older. In his first report in 1852 the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Minnesota protested that in many States "the teacher is forbidden the social position to which, if competent, he is entitled, and is looked upon as a servant, rather than an equal, and therefore receives but a servant's wages."

The movement for normal schools for the training of teachers was begun in 1827. The first of these schools were established in Massachusetts in 1839. In New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and some other States, it was already a settled policy, as far as it could be carried out, to have young women as teachers "because," as a Massachusetts report expressed it, "of the superior tact and moral power natural to the female character." But in the far West just being settled, it was difficult to obtain women teachers. "A large class of ignorant pretenders, ruined spendthrifts, and aimless adventurers fasten themselves upon our schools [as teachers] until something better turns up," complained Andrew J. Moulder, Superintendent of Public Instruction of California in 1859. Back of the problem of securing women teachers was the need of these teachers being educated in public colleges both to provide the nation with an unfailing supply and to develop them in an atmosphere completely in harmony with the popular currents.

In 1853 a petition was submitted to Congress by *Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book* for the national encouragement of normal schools for the education of teachers. The petition declared that at least 20,000 teachers were required. "To find 20,000 young men for the work is utterly impossible, while the

Great West, the mines of California, are inviting them to adventure and activity. Therefore young women must become the teachers of common schools or these must be given up." Concluding, the petition said: "In short, the value of all the physical improvements in our country will be immeasurably enhanced by this provision for Female Education; because in the influence of intelligent and pure-minded women lies the moral power which gives safety and permanence to our institutions and true glory to our nation." Normal schools soon became a widespread fundamental of the American educational system.

While the American people were briskly establishing schools everywhere, they necessarily had to come in sharp collision with the practice of factory and other industrial owners employing child labor. Of what use, they asked, were the founding and the maintaining of schools if many children were to be denied opportunity to go to them? Then and there was the inception of that accumulating moral revolt against the child labor evil which later was expressed politically in law after law.

Tract No. 1 issued on October 1, 1831, by the New York Association for the Gratuitous Distribution of Discussions on Political Economy advocated that all children should be equally well fed and clothed and "should be exempted from the necessity to labor *at all*, till age and strength and education had given their sanction to its propriety."

When an article on "Children in British Factories," showing the horrible conditions of child labor in England and Wales, went the rounds of the American press in 1832, the *New England Artisan* in June of that year described how children in Rhode Island and other factories worked from five o'clock in the morning to eight o'clock at night "with scarcely enough relaxation for eating meals," and told of the inroads made upon those tender laborers by disease and death. "Why attempt to awaken the sympathies of the public for the children of a foreign and distant

empire when we have not a heart to feel nor a tear to shed for the miseries of our own?" Similar descriptions of conditions in Pennsylvania as well as New England were published in other American magazines. Educators began to insist that every child had the inalienable right to an education.

Horace Mann, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and one of the greatest of American educators, wrote in his annual report to Governor Briggs, on November 29, 1849, that the will of God "places the right of every child that is born into the world to such a degree of education as will enable him, and as far as possible, will predispose him, to perform all domestic, social, civil and moral duties. . . . As individuals, or as an organized community we have no natural right; we can derive no authority or countenance from reason; we can cite no attribute or purpose of the divine nature for giving birth to any human being, and then inflicting upon that being the curse of ignorance, of poverty and of vice, with all their attendant calamities. . . ."

As early as 1828 a bill had been introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature forbidding any cotton or woollen manufacturer to employ any minor between twelve and eighteen years old unless the employer made a written agreement before a magistrate to provide for instruction in reading and writing. Such measures then and later for the alleviation of child labor conditions were virulently and long successfully opposed by confederated factory capitalists. These would not then have been victorious had it not been that the issue of chattel slavery soon came along in growing intensity to divert the moral feeling of a great part of the American people in a single direction.

Yet when put to the question, American capitalists had to admit that education produced a notable superiority in American workingmen. The report in 1841 to the British Secretary of State for the Home Department from the British Poor Law Commissioners on the training of pauper children, contained the

testimony of James Kempson, a Philadelphia cotton manufacturer. Summarized, his testimony stated: "Our foreign workmen are drunkards, ignorant and unruly. American workmen are better educated, more intelligent and more moral, and refrain more from sensual indulgence. This is due to their superior education, to their moral instruction and to their temperate habits. We manufacturers are always anxious that the children should absent themselves from the manufactory during two or three months of the year to attend the schools." The report brought out vividly how the British ruling classes discouraged education of the masses, or when these were schooled parochially sought to "educate them for their station in life." Frequently the report used this phrase as well as "taint of pauperism."

In 1851 only one in every eight and a half of the population in London was receiving elementary education, and that mostly in denominational schools. In a speech on an educational project bill in the British Parliament in 1847—a bill meeting with acrimonious, protracted opposition from the so-called upper classes—Macaulay pointed out that the report of registers of marriages in England showed that of nearly 130,000 couples married in the year 1844, not more than 40,000 of the bridegrooms or 60,000 of the brides could sign their names. As a contrast, Macaulay reminded Parliament how one of the very first acts of the Massachusetts settlers and of William Penn had been to declare education of the people a supreme necessity. The Ragged School had been established in London in 1837 to gather in mendicant and ragged children so prolific in that city.

"When," the *Knickerbocker Magazine* had asked in August, 1835, speaking of America, "was so general an anxiety manifested to extend the privileges of the people, to ameliorate their condition, to give them facilities for instruction and fit them for the free, honest and intelligent exercise of their rights? We venture confidently to respond—Never! . . . Those who appre-



hend a diminution of the privileges of our people must be ignorant that the tendency of Americans, instead of being aristocratic, is decidedly radical. They seek for the fullest and farthest extension of the doctrines of democracy."

This confident, aggressive, radical spirit was not satisfied with an elementary education for the people. It demanded advanced education. The Workingmen's Party in 1829 declared that it was "an exclusive privilege for one portion of the community to have *the means of education in colleges* while another is restricted to the common schools, or perhaps, by extreme poverty, even deprived of the limited education to be acquired in those establishments." The resolution went on: "Our voice, therefore, shall be raised in favor of a system which shall be equally open to *all*, as in a real republic it should be."

There had been formed in July, 1831, an association the work and agitation of which were powerful in developing both a widespread sentiment in favor of colleges available to the poor and the conviction that a virile, democratic manliness was necessary in college life.

This association, the Society for Promoting Manual Labor in Literary Institutions, was organized because, as it stated, a reform in American colleges was greatly needed for the preservation of the students' health and for imparting energy to their character by habits of vigorous, useful exercise.

Its General Agent, Theodore D. Weld, was sent on a long tour of inspection of colleges and to make addresses. He visited Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama, traveling during a single year 4,575 miles. He rode 2,630 miles in public conveyances, 1,800 miles on horseback, and walked 145 miles, making 236 public addresses, 110 of which were on manual labor education, 97 upon temperance and the remainder upon general topics. In his report, published on Jan-



uary 28, 1833, he presented in detail the results of his investigations. Summarized, these were:

College students widely held the old aristocratic scorn of work and affected aristocratic languor. Forty years previously Dr. Rush of Philadelphia had urged physical exercise in the intervals of study, and recently so had Justice Story of the Supreme Court of the United States when he declared of promising college youths that by reason of their inane, ruinous habits the physical and often the intellectual powers of half of them were broken down or enfeebled before they arrived at manhood. A graphic description was given in Weld's report of how students spent their leisure hours in idle vacuity, in slouching about, in gambling, dissipation or licentiousness. This system, the report said, "is anti-republican in its practical tendencies because it makes labor disreputable." Bodily exercise, the report urged, was indispensable to the physical, intellectual and moral nature of man, and should be incorporated in all systems of education to alternate with study.

It was the propaganda of this society which caused the systematic introduction of outdoor sports in college life. If in some cases these have since been pushed to excess, it is well to recall the purpose of their origin; their very excess was due to an intense zeal to vivify an American ideal. The society's propaganda also broke down in Northern and Western colleges the old supercilious, aristocratic prejudice against students supporting themselves by working while in college.

Furthermore, the society's addresses and reports greatly helped to convince the American people that college as well as other kinds of education should be comprehensively provided. The society's first annual report in 1833 set forth these facts:

"At many of our colleges the annual expense, exclusive of books and clothing, is not far from \$200; at others \$150; and the cheapest about \$100. Who, then, can educate their sons at

college? Not more than one family in twenty. Thus nineteenth-tenths of our population are shut out from the advantages of education in the higher branches; and as knowledge is power, the sons of the rich, by enjoying advantages for the acquisition of this power vastly superior to others, may secure to themselves a monopoly of those honors and emoluments which are conferred upon the well educated. In this way society is divided into castes. The laboring classes become hewers of wood and drawers of water for the educated. . . . The general and State governments have done much in order to bring education within the reach of the great mass of the people. Millions have been expended in the erection of buildings, the establishment of professorships and in the purchase of libraries and apparatus. And what is the result? Why, the wealthy can educate their sons a little cheaper than before. But college education is still so expensive that the community generally receive *no benefit from such appropriations.*"

Speaking before a committee of the New York Assembly in 1838, Daniel D. Barnard energetically advocated colleges for the poor as well as the rich.

"It will never do," he said, to permit education to become a monopoly of the rich." When these colleges were placed on the right foundation, Barnard went on, they would become nurseries of men trained for the Republic's cause and service. "Then and then only, will they operate to check the growth of an aristocratic pride and distinction, and promote that healthy equality without which we may perhaps have the forms of republicanism, but none of its essence or benefits." The Boston Association of the Friends of the Rights of Man adopted, in May 1838, a declaration that every man, by virtue of the fact that he was a man, had the right to develop freely and perfect his whole nature as a moral, intellectual and physical being. An article in the *Boston Quarterly Review* in January, 1841, condemned many

existing collegiate institutions as founded by the wealthy and accordingly conducted for the benefit of the favored classes.

Presently came the time when the high school (the equivalent in many respects of the old-time college) was added and fastened to the public school system, as also in many cities colleges for still more advanced courses.

The realization of another omission impelled the most vigorous efforts to supply the deficiency. To round the development of children culturally and politically it was found that common school libraries and public libraries were a vital requisite. By the year 1859 numerous cities, towns and villages had common school libraries in operation.

The Ohio statute of 1853 was a typical law. It devoted one-tenth of a mill upon each dollar of property taxable for State purposes as an annual fund for common school libraries. "It has become a sort of axiom with many of our ablest and most experienced educators," H. H. Barney, Ohio State Commissioner of Common Schools, wrote in his report for 1856, "that a good library is quite as indispensable to a good school as a good schoolroom and a good teacher. Indeed, it is now regarded in many places as part of the business of the teacher to encourage in his pupils a taste for reading." Elsewhere the report commented: "As, without schools, a large majority of the people would continue through life ignorant of the art of reading and writing, so without suitable libraries placed within reach of the young, many would never acquire a taste for reading." Good books, the report continued, coupled with the habit and love of reading them, were, like virtuous associations, of great value to the minds and morals of the young. The knowledge and mental training imbibed and the tastes and habits formed would make children wiser, better and happier.

The encouragement of libraries by legislatures and private donors was an old, well-settled principle in American life. Nearly

all of these libraries, however, were exclusive or limited in character. Some were attached to colleges; others were purely for the benefit of subscribers. Such institutions as modern libraries free to the entire people did not exist.

When in 1764 Harvard Hall, Harvard College, containing more than 5,000 volumes, was destroyed by fire, the Massachusetts legislature immediately appropriated £2,000 for a new building. Further sums were received from a general subscription in Massachusetts towns and counties, and a long line of donors contributed books or bequeathed sums. The Boston Athenæum, founded in 1806, subsisted at first on funds raised by private subscriptions, later added to by private donations of estates, money and books. The Boston Public Library was initiated in 1852 by private benefactions. The Peabody Institute, at South Danvers, Massachusetts, was the gift of George Peabody to his native town. John Jacob Astor's will in 1848 bequeathed \$400,000 for the establishment of a public library in New York City. From Peter Cooper's generosity came Cooper Union a few years later in the same city. Other men of wealth founded public libraries in other cities.

In making donations for the popular benefit, rich men were not setting a standard but were aligning themselves with a widely-cherished American sentiment.

Two conspicuous illustrations will show this. A number of Boston citizens, in April, 1829, had formed the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Its address to the public pointed out that for children from infancy to the age of seventeen means of education had been provided, but for adults the opportunities of mental and moral cultivation were anything but adequate. The Society therefore purposed to supply useful information by circulation of books, giving lectures and by other means, all at a very moderate rate.

The Boston Association of the Friends of the Rights of Man



came forward with a higher ideal, dispensing altogether with any suggestion of patronage and setting forth as a social duty the unrestricted affording of cultural facilities to every man, woman and child. In its declaration issued in 1838 it called for the widespread establishment of public libraries, lectures and public forums to diffuse knowledge among the people on great subjects, thus "to kindle in our own hearts and in the hearts of others a love of virtue and the genuine sentiments of Humanity." Concerning this utterance, the Boston *Quarterly Review*, April, 1838, observed: "These workingmen seem to forget themselves, to sink themselves in common Humanity, and to dream of no good for themselves which is not at the same time good for universal Man. . . . We would not discourage these dreamers, as the world calls them. The man whose mind never strays beyond the actual, never soars with the ideal, and loses itself in that which is not and perhaps will not be realized, is never able to perform any great and glorious deed."

The American people soon converted these dreams into solid realities. Properly appreciating gifts of libraries from rich men, Americans at the same time did not believe such a dependence consistent with their own self-respect. The unquenchable popular demand was for libraries established and maintained at public expense. By 1859, according to Rhee's "Manual of Public Libraries" published in that year, there were in the United States a reported and estimated 50,890 libraries. Of these, 2,890 were general public libraries, 18,000 were common school libraries, and 30,000 were Sunday School libraries, the whole having an estimated 12,720,686 volumes.

The stage was reached where Senator Sumner was able to say elatedly, as he did in the United States Senate, on January 24, 1867: "Down to a recent day public libraries were chiefly collegiate. In Europe they were collegiate or conventional. There were no libraries of the people. Such libraries are now



appearing in England, in France. . . . But this movement, like every liberal tendency, is more marked in the United States. Here public libraries are springing up in all the northern States. They are extending like a belt of light across the country."

So profound an impression did reports of the phenomena of American educational progress and its ever-widening activities make upon European educators that some of them came for personal investigation. One from Sweden, P. A. Siljeström, wrote a book entitled "The Educational Institutions of the United States," the English translation of which was published in London in 1853. Its preface burst into this glorification:

"The United States are the only communities in the world which from their very commencement were prepared to establish popular education as one of the fundamental pillars of the social and political fabric; they are the only communities in the world in which the highest possible degree of enlightenment in the people has been practically and universally recognized, not only as a very desirable object from the philanthropic point of view, but as also constituting the principal cog-wheel in the machinery of the State." Elsewhere in the Preface he related how one of the first questions addressed to the stranger by Americans, young and old, men and women, was, "Have you seen our public schools?" When the stranger found that in reality the public schools were the most important concern of the American nation "then he feels that in the depths of American society there are forces at work which in Europe have as yet produced very mediocre results. This, I think, is the highest praise that can be bestowed on the United States. This constitutes the true greatness of the nation, and the best guarantee of its stability."

Invincibly the American educational process sped forward, then and later overcoming obstacles viewed with dismay by faltering observers.

Before 1830 immigration to the United States was inconsid-

erable; in that year there were only 27,153 immigrants. From 102,000 in 1845 the number increased year by year, rising to 463,000 in 1851 and increasing annually. It was estimated that in a little more than thirty-six years ended December 31, 1855, there had come to the United States 4,250,000 immigrants. The great proportion were Irish, approximately 1,747,000; several hundred thousand were English and Scotch; 188,725 were French; and 1,206,087 were Germans.

It was now that the word Americanize was first used. Various organizations pointed out that here was a vast influx of peoples having habits, principles and manners very different from the Americans; that few had any practical knowledge of republican institutions; and that a larger portion did not speak the English language at the time of their arrival. To Americanize this stranger population, assimilating it in feeling, intelligence, habit and language, was a superlative need.

The more plastic of the adult immigrants responded to a considerable change. Their children, absorbing American principles and standards under the formative influence of the public schools, became predominantly American. By the time the third generation from the immigrant was reached, the metamorphosis was complete, no trace remaining of alien attachments.

To judge by comparison the celerity of this process it is only necessary to recall that after centuries of residence in Canada, French-Canadians in eastern portions of that country still retain, in a large measure, their old language and other identity. And reverting to the United States we have noted how in our own time problems of far heavier and more heterogeneous immigration have confronted the American people and have been solved to a certain extent by the evening public school in the case of adults, and, in the case of immigrants' children, to an almost all-inclusive degree, by the regular day public school. Just as the American people successfully fused the great immigrant in-

pourings before and after the Civil War, so they are now indomitably seeking ways to grapple with the Americanizing of several million immigrants who cannot speak English. From 1910 to 1919, according to the annual reports of the Commissioner General of Immigration, more than 4,000,000 immigrants arrived from non-English speaking countries.

During the Civil War, when the aristocratic classes in Europe, and especially in England, were arrayed against the cause for which the Northern and Western States were fighting, Henry Ward Beecher, an eloquent American minister, delivered a series of remarkable addresses both in America and in England to enlighten the world on what constituted American principles.

In an address on April 3, 1862, on "The Success of American Democracy," he elaborated upon the root ideas underlying American ideas of education. These, he said, were: Man was the most sacred trust of God to the world. Accepted as such, a distinction could not be made between one man and another. All governments were from and for man, and not over him and upon him; all institutions were not his masters but his servants. Therefore, he had to be thoroughly enlarged, thoroughly empowered by development, and then thoroughly trusted. America stood in contrast with the world in holding and teaching this idea.

"The education of the common people follows, then, as a necessity," he went on. "They are to be fitted to govern. Since all things are from them and for them, they must be educated to their function, to their destiny. No pains are spared, we know, in Europe, to educate princes and nobles who are to govern. No expense is counted too great to prepare the governing classes for their function. America has her governing class, too, and that governing class is the whole people. It is a slower work because it is so much larger. It is never carried so high because there is so much more of it. It is easy to lift up a crowned class. It is not so easy to lift up society from the very foundation. That is

the work of centuries. And, therefore, though we have not an education so deep nor so high as it is in some other places, we have it broader than it is anywhere else in the world; and we have learned that for ordinary affairs intelligence among the common people is better than treasuries of knowledge among particular classes of the people. . . .

"And so there comes up the American conception of a common people as an order of nobility, or as standing in the same place to us that orders of nobility stand to other peoples. Not that, after our educated men and women of genius are counted out, we call all that remain the common people. The whole community, top and bottom and intermediate, the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, the leaders and the followers, constitute with us the commonwealth. . . .

"In America there is not one single element of civilization that is not made to depend in the end upon public opinion. Art, law, administration, policy, reformations of morals, religious teachings, all derive, in our form of society, the most potent influence from the common people. For although the common people are educated in preconceived notions of religion, the great intuitions and instincts of the heart of man rise up afterwards, and in their turn influence back. So there is action and reaction."

The baleful influence of chattel slavery in demoralizing education in the Southern States; the mental superiority possessed by the mass of educated men in the Northern armies; the demand of Northern idealists after the struggle was won that liberated Negroes as well as poor whites be educated—these and other kindred phases are dealt with in a more relevant place in a later chapter.

Notwithstanding the glowing acknowledgments of a succession of European writers to the marvels wrought by American educational ideas and system, the claim was still made in Europe that the movement and its results were exaggerated. Americans



speaking on the subject were accused of "characteristic Yankee boasting," while European eulogists were set down as having been altogether unduly impressed by superficial appearances.

A survey made by the French Educational Commission on Public Instruction in the United States fully confirmed the statements made by previous investigators. This Commission, sent to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, published its report in Paris in 1878.

Saying that country schoolhouses in America were mostly frame buildings and that the log house had not disappeared, the report gave this extolling picture: "You have only to see these coquettish schoolhouses, in the midst of vast lawns, shaded with fine trees and surrounded by palings, to judge the place which the school holds in public opinion. It is indeed a national institution, devoted to the education of 'boys whose vote will decide the fate of the republic, and of girls one of whom may be the mother of the President of the United States.' "

Then followed an encomium on American high schools. No part of the American school system, the report said, was more essentially national or presented more original features, or in some respects was further removed from European ideas. The report of the French Educational Commission continued:

"Peruse the course of study in these high schools; think of these children of workmen and workwomen passing four or five years in adorning, strengthening and cultivating their minds by studies that everywhere else are reserved for the well-to-do, and tell us if these institutions do not bear the very seal and impress of American civilization.

"Need one be astonished then at the frank pride with which the American citizen speaks of these schools? Has he not a right to be proud when, by sure documentary evidence, he shows us the son and daughter of the humblest artisan so mentally elevated that between them and the privileged of fortune, no difference of



culture, no trace of intellectual inferiority, is to be discovered? If it is glorious to see society freely giving to the poor the benefit of a public school education, is it not a still more extraordinary spectacle to behold a nation that deems it would wrong its humblest citizen were their children denied *any* opportunity for the full and free expression of their minds? . . . .

“So far as social equality can possibly be reached on this earth, it is attained by the American high school. In other countries it is to be feared that the children of the different classes of society, though brought together for a while in the public school, must soon find themselves separated by the whole distance between their respective families; indeed it must be so, since one child enters on his apprenticeship and thus stops short in his intellectual development at the very time when the other is just beginning his. In the United States every effort is made to delay and diminish this separation, to carry as far as possible, and as high as possible, that common instruction which effaces the distinction of rich and poor.”

Here we shall cease dwelling upon this subject. The purpose of these chapters is not to give a history of education in the United States but to present the idealism of the American people leading to the establishment of the public school system.

All the outstretching activities that followed have been but amplifications of earlier principles.

Compulsory school attendance and minimum school-leaving age laws are one outgrowth. Likewise the rural school system, the medical examination and treatment of pupils, and the teaching of hygiene are applications of the American ideal declared nearly a century ago that children should be developed physically as well as mentally and spiritually. Educating the Indian was an inevitable sequence. The implanting of the American public school system in American outlying territories and possessions—

in Alaska, Hawaii, Samoa, the Philippine Islands, Guam, Porto Rico, the Panama Canal Zone—has been obviously the expansion of the ideals already flowering almost ubiquitously in mainland America. The movement to secure a still more democratic administration of American public schools by regular conferences between administrative school officials and representatives of teachers' organizations is an ensuing enlargement of democratic ideals. Public impatience toward conditions responsible for illiteracy in any locality is but the continuation of an old American standard. The proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States empowering the Federal Government to limit, regulate or prohibit the labor of children under eighteen years old is the culmination of the educational and moral movement begun a century ago. This amendment, approved by Congress and now being voted upon by the various States, is meeting with much opposition. Antagonists do not defend child labor in factories or mines but protest that such an amendment will confer too sweeping and centralized powers upon Congress. The practical interdicting of private and sectarian schools, as recently adopted by Oregon in a constitutional amendment, has been both passionately assailed and fervently defended. Yet it must be recognized that essentially it is nothing but a stricter and more sweeping application of principles initiated by the American people many decades ago when, as we have set forth, they declared that schools breeding class distinctions and religious animosities were hostile to the interests of American democracy. In 1920 there were 2,034,642 boys and girls in private and parochial schools in America and its outlying possessions.

The sustaining of the public schools in all of their integrity is a subject of foremost solicitude to the vast mass of the American people. In 1920 there were in continental America and in American possessions 271,319 public school buildings used for elementary secondary education. Total financial outlays have been

incalculably colossal. The cost of public schools increased from \$140,000,000 in 1890 to more than \$1,000,000,000 in 1920, and the cost of teachers' salaries from \$96,000,000 to \$436,000,000. In stating these increases allowance should be made, however, for depreciation in the purchasing power of money as gauged by the higher cost of necessities. Enrollment in the public elementary schools increased in the same period from nearly 13,000,000 to 21,578,000, and enrollment in high schools from 200,000 to 2,000,000 with an average daily attendance for the whole of more than 16,000,000. So keenly interested is the great body of the American people in public schools and their constant improvement in facilities, architecture and administration, that popular vigilance is alert to prod or thrust out of power any city administration neglecting their betterment.

## CHAPTER IX

### SLAVERY ENGRAFTED

"ONE day the North will rise in her majesty and put slavery under our feet, and then we shall extend the area of freedom. The blessing of Almighty God will come down upon the noblest people the world ever saw—who have triumphed over Theocracy, Monarchy, Aristocracy, Despotocracy, and have got a Democracy—a government of all, for all and by all—a church without a bishop, a state without a king, a community without a lord, and a family without a slave."

Thus, reviewing the past and heralding the future, did Theodore Parker speak in exultant strain in a discourse on the Nebraska Question, on February 12, 1854.

Enslavement of Negroes was another idea fastened upon America by the Old World with its heritage of slavery systems reaching into antiquity. Records in Spanish archives show that one of Spain's first acts after the discovery of America was the introduction of slaves. The reason given was one of expediency: that inasmuch as the Indians could not be made to do "various useful but painful labors," strong, active, pliant laborers were necessary. Realizing, however, that the deliberate initiation of slavery was at variance with the professed humane precepts of Christianity, Spain had to supply an explanation to harmonize the anomaly. It thereupon produced a justification. The purport of this was that Negro tribes, in a constant state of warfare in Africa, killed captives. Therefore, when Christian nations ensnared Negroes and shipped them off to be enslaved, those nations were in actuality rescuing helpless heathens from a perilous existence and placing them in lands where "they

obtained the inestimable advantage of a knowledge of the true God and of all the benefits attendant on civilization." From that original justification grew an elaborate and sinister code becoming embodied in views, arguments, decrees, laws and court decisions.

By the time when, in August, 1619, a Dutch ship with a cargo of twenty African slaves arrived at Jamestown, Virginia, the acceptance of this justification had permeated what was termed the statesmanship of western European countries.

Cloaking the real motive of spoils and profit under a benevolent pretension of piety, nations gave their sanction to the hideous traffic. Commanding the seas, the British monarchy outstripped all other nations in encouraging it. Under British protection, slavery was increased and extended from one American colony to another. Exalted officials shared in the proceeds of the infamy; Queen Anne, it is recorded, reserved for herself one-quarter of the stock of the Royal African Company which, for a time, had a monopoly of the slave trade to America. The very laws decreed by British officials in some of the colonies were designed to stimulate the purchasing of slaves. Thus by the land grant act of 1705 in Virginia, the right of extensive landholding was made dependent upon servant or slave holding. No one was allowed to take title to more than 5,000 acres unless he owned a certain number of slaves, in which case he was permitted to add two hundred acres more for each titheable servant or slave. In South Carolina fifty additional acres were allowed for each slave held.

"The heinous and crying sin of man stealing." This is how the Massachusetts General Court or legislature in 1646 branded the kidnapping, manacling and enslaving of Negroes. In 1641 the Massachusetts General Court had passed an act against the slave traffic, following it with the law of 1646. "Vile and most odious courses, justly abhorred of all good and just men," declared



the 1646 law of the slave trade. The punishment of death was ordered for anyone caught engaged in it, and it was further ordered that all Negroes brought in be sent back to their native Guinea.

Connecticut, in 1650, and Rhode Island two years later, passed acts for the suppression of slavery. Pennsylvania Quakers meeting at Germantown, in 1688, drew up a memorial against "the buying and keeping of Negroes," and in 1696 demanded that their importation cease. "Here," said the resolution of 1688, "is liberty of conscience, which is right and reasonable; here ought likewise to be liberty of the body, except of evil-doers, which is another case. But to bring men hither, or to rob and sell them against their will, we stand against." In Georgia, James Oglethorpe denounced slavery as a horrid crime, but planters there, eager to secure and extend estates and have an assured supply of labor, turned to the possession of slaves as an easy means.

While in the North slavery was declared an outrage against humanity, it was not defended in the South as an institution based upon right. Not until much subsequently did any part of the American people defend it as a natural or racial right. The general view then was that slavery had been foisted upon the colonies, and that it was an iniquitous exotic. Act after act was passed by various colonies in the endeavor to put a stop to the slave traffic, but in every case royal governors intervened with their vetoes. This voiding of laws was a rankling grievance on the part of leaders of American thought at the time of the Revolution. Reciting instances of the King of England's misrule, the preamble to the Constitution adopted by Virginia in 1776 included the charge that he had prompted the Negroes to rise in arms against the Revolutionists—"those very Negroes whom, by an inhuman use of his negative, he hath refused us permission to exclude by law."

The Continental Congress passed a resolution against the importation of slaves. Progressive Americans sought to eradi-

cate slavery. The Pennsylvania Abolition Society, formed before the Revolution with Benjamin Franklin as president, excoriated it. In 1773 Dr. Benjamin Rush had published an address scathingly combating arguments in its favor. "Future ages," he wrote, "when they read the accounts of the slave trade, will be at a loss which to condemn most, our folly or our guilt in abetting this direct violation of nature and religion." In the Virginia legislature, Jefferson prepared a bill for the gradual emancipation, education and colonization of slaves—a project he believed to be practicable. George Washington, James Madison, John Adams, Patrick Henry and others reprobated slavery. Abolition societies were successively organized in New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

In their attitude toward slavery the States were now divided into three general groups. The Northern States, with their comparatively few slaves, favored the abolition of the slave trade and slavery. Virginia, Maryland and Delaware were against the slave traffic and not disinclined toward some method of getting rid of slavery, while North Carolina, although not prohibiting importations of slaves, was lukewarm towards slavery. South Carolina and Georgia only insisted upon both slave importations and slavery.

Vermont's Constitution of 1777 excluded slavery forever. The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 operated likewise in that State and in its offshoot New Hampshire. Connecticut barred slavery. Pennsylvania in 1780 passed an act for its gradual abolition. "We esteem it a peculiar blessing granted to us," said the Pennsylvania act, "that we are enabled this day to add one more step to universal civilization, by removing as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in an undeserved bondage, and from which, by the assumed authority of the kings of Great Britain, no effectual, legal relief could be obtained. Weaned by a long course of experience from those narrow preju-

dices and partialities which we had imbibed, we find our hearts enlarged with kindness and benevolence towards men of all conditions and nations. . . ." No Negro child thereafter born in Pennsylvania was to be a slave. In a single sentence the Rhode Island act of 1784 authorizing the manumission of Negroes and the gradual abolition of slavery, disposed of the plea that slaves were property. "The holding of mankind in a state of slavery as private property, which has gradually obtained by unrestrained custom and the permission of laws, is repugnant to the principle [that all men are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness] and is subversive of the happiness of mankind, the great end of all civil government."

When the Federal Constitution was drafted in 1787 and ratified in 1788 there were only three States—North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia—allowing importations of Negroes. How did it happen that South Carolina and Georgia were able to have their way in the Federal Constitutional Convention? A number of reasons supplied the explanation.

Customary history gives the impression that both during and after the Revolutionary War the American people sustained an exalted state of feeling. This, as we have already pointed out, was not so. After independence was won there came one of those reactions often following an extraordinary effort or strain. Occurring in the course of individual life, so these slumps precipitate themselves in the careers of nations. The American people were subjected to the influence of one of these recoils after the tension of the great Civil War, and to the influence of another succeeding the glow of the World War.

It was during the ordeal of one of these backsliding intervals that the Constitutional Convention was held. Luther Martin, one of the delegates, writing an analysis of the Convention's proceedings to the Maryland legislature in 1788, expressed the situation in this way: "At this time we do not generally hold this

[slave] commerce in so great an abhorrence as we have done. When our liberties were at stake, we warmly felt for the common rights of men. The danger being thought to be past which threatened ourselves, we are daily growing more insensible to those rights . . .”

According to the statement made by James Iredell, one of the North Carolina delegates to the Federal Convention, “it was the wish of a great majority of the Convention to put an end to the [slave] trade immediately, but the States of South Carolina and Georgia would not agree to it.” Judge Iredell (he later was appointed to the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States) made this statement to the North Carolina Convention called to pass upon the ratification of the Federal Constitution. James Madison made a statement to the same effect in the Virginia Convention, and Thomas Jefferson wrote a similar statement.

The question now comes up why the great majority of the delegates acceded to the demands of those from two States. First, there was the moral depression which made them yield to threats and arguments. The one paramount aim of the Convention was to unite all of the States in a Union. Should the Constitution forbid further bringing in of slaves and lose the adhesion of South Carolina and Georgia, or should it, by deferring to their demands, insure their entry into the Union? This was the issue. “Great as the evil is,” Madison explained to the Virginia Convention, referring to the slave traffic, “a dismemberment of the Union would be worse. If those States should disunite from other States for not indulging them in the temporary continuance of this traffic, they might solicit and obtain aid from foreign powers.”

The arguments made by the representatives of South Carolina and Georgia in the Federal Constitutional Convention were: That those two States had lost a great many slaves during the Revolutionary War and had to supply the deficiency. That if slave importations were stopped they would have to buy slaves in



Virginia and pay high prices. That without slaves their country would be entirely depopulated because by reason of its nature it could not be cultivated without them. That slaves were property and the only species of valuable property possessed by the South. That much of the land held by Southern planters had been acquired with the expectation that it would be improved by the labor, in great part, of imported slaves.

The result in the Federal Constitutional Convention was a compromise by which slave owners obtained three concessions, all pregnant with enormous future evils. One was the allowance of the slave traffic for twenty years more. The second, upon the principle that both property and persons should be accepted as a basis for representation in Congress, apportioned the number of representatives by adding to the whole number of free persons three-fifths of the slaves. The third was a clause under the construing of which laws could be and later were passed for the return of fugitive slaves to their owners. The word slave was not used in the Constitution because—so Madison explained—the Convention did not want to recognize property rights in man.

In adopting the Constitution its framers confidently believed that the slave area would be restricted to a comparatively small part of the entire Union and that in time it would be effectively minimized or effaced.

Suggestions were frequent of general eventual voluntary manumission. James Galloway said in the North Carolina Convention that he thought the ultimate intent was manumission; the question perplexing him was to what country the manumitted slaves should be sent. There were those, also—James Wilson and some others—who hinted that economic laws would increasingly show that slave labor was more expensive than free labor. The framers of the Constitution did not and could not foresee the subsequent immense expansion of the slavery area—the acquisi-



tion of the Louisiana territory, the cession of Florida, the annexation of Texas.

When the Federal Constitution was submitted for ratification to the States and it was realized that slavery had been perpetuated and reinforced, the moral slump disappeared. In nearly all of the State Conventions including Virginia's the most vigorous denunciations were made of slavery and the slave trade. But it was explained that the compromise was unavoidable and the result the best that could be achieved. On the other hand, delegates in the South Carolina Convention were dissatisfied with the limitation of the slave traffic to twenty years, and were only conciliated when General Pinckney assured them that the South Carolina delegates had made the best terms that they could, and that slave owners had, on the whole, better security than previously.

Congress passed an act prohibiting slavery in the territory later becoming the States of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. Up to this time, however, the institution of slavery had not been defended as a thing embedded in right but as a need arising from expediency. Now there were forthcoming from a few yet influential Southerners insistent assertions that the enslavement of Negroes was morally right. In asking why the slave trade should be restricted to twenty years, Rawlins Lowndes, of South Carolina, said in 1788 that he thought "the trade could be justified on the principles of religion, humanity and justice; for certainly to translate a set of human beings from a bad country to a better one was fulfilling every part of these principles." This was almost literally a rehashing of the old Spanish justification. Once this claim was stated and reiterated, it came into conflict with the humanitarian idea and religious convictions of a considerable part of the American people.

A Slave Power intrenched and portentous was the affrighting fact confronting all Americans believing in the sacred right of

every human being to liberty. Hitherto slaves had been mainly used on rice, sugar and indigo plantations, but the invention of the cotton gin gave an enormous impetus to the widespread cultivation of cotton, and consecutively huge new areas of territory south and southwest were opened to settlement. The demand for slaves greatly increased. Cargoes of slaves were rushed from Africa to the ports of South Carolina and Georgia; the ships conveying these were largely owned and operated by New England shippers. Up to the time of the Revolution, 300,000 slaves, it was estimated, had been imported into the thirteen American colonies. Natural increase brought the Negro slave population to 697,897 by the year 1790. In 1800 the number of slaves in the United States was estimated at 893,000 in a total population of 5,305,952.

The National Anti-Slavery Convention in 1795 made a mighty effort to stop the slave traffic and uproot slavery. It issued one set of perfervid addresses to the people of South Carolina and Georgia, and another to the people of the United States generally. In the first set it impressively appealed for relief for those "deprived of their natural rights and forcibly held in bondage," and gave warning of the consequences resulting from the slave traffic—a warning then too true and becoming increasingly truer. By the traffic in man, the address said, "the minds of our citizens are debased and their hearts hardened by contemplating these people only through the medium of avarice or prejudice." The address to the American people generally declared the convention's aim to be universal emancipation of Negro slaves.

Both Georgia and South Carolina adopted laws prohibiting the importation of slaves. But the very Constitution of Georgia, that of 1798, doing this, deprived the legislature of any power to pass emancipatory laws without the consent of the respective slave owners. South Carolina, in 1803, repealed its law against slave importations.

Memorial after memorial from abolition societies flowed in upon Congress. "Dark clouds intercept the splendor of the horizon of our country," read one from the American Convention for the Abolition of Slavery, January 1, 1806. "We still hear the clanking fetters of slavery in the dominion of liberty; and we hear them with increasing noise. Eminence in the slave trade has long disgracefully distinguished a number of citizens of an Eastern State. Regardless of their own or their country's reputation, they have long been the inhuman forgers of chains for the sons of Africa. By their means the American flag still continues to flutter on an insulted territory, the witness of the greatest enormities. . . ."

The citing of these American declarations for the abolition of the slave traffic and of slavery itself is important in showing that humanitarian sentiment in the United States was concerned with freeing the slave at a time when European nations had arrived or were arriving at the point of stopping the slave traffic only. There had been abolition societies in England, chiefly Quakers, but their action had been long preceded by that of the Quakers in America. The entire governing and dominating classes in England, however, were either favorable to slavery in the British colonies or lethargic on the question. During the French Revolution an abolition society had been formed in Paris, but its influence was of no weight; the French system of slavery continued in the French colonies. In St. Domingo or Hayti it was only overthrown as an eventual consequence of the insurrection led by the great Negro liberator, Toussaint l'Ouverture. Denmark in 1792, by royal proclamation, abolished the slave trade but this in no wise affected the issue of slavery itself.

In 1794 the United States Government forbade American citizens to engage in the foreign slave trade. By 1807 two great seafaring nations had come to the point of prohibiting the slave traffic: the United States, as directed by the Constitutional provi-

sion drafted in 1787, and Great Britain by a Parliamentary act adopted in 1807, the result of twenty years of agitation by a committee for the abolition of the slave trade.

From 1791 to 1816, according to answers made by the African Society of London to a questionnaire submitted by Prime Minister Lord Castlereagh, the number of Negroes snatched from Africa amounted probably to upwards of 1,500,000.<sup>1</sup> British, Portuguese, French, Dutch, American and Danish vessels all participated in the traffic. British vessels alone, during a series of years in the earlier part of that period, carried away 55,000 slaves annually. Notwithstanding prohibitory acts, ships of various nations, including British and American, continued the traffic. In 1809 a British court decision held that slave ships were liable to capture and condemnation. The Spanish and in some cases the Portuguese flag now became the disguise for the slave trade carried on by ships of other nations. Spain and Portugal proceeded to outlaw the traffic. It was, however, continued by a process of evasions and subterfuges, with the frequent corrupt connivance of Spanish officials.<sup>2</sup>

American and British cruisers scoured the seas and watched the slave ports. Undoubtedly in some cases their commanders were not any too vigilant. But even when they were conscientious they often pleaded their powerlessness. The captain of the U. S. frigate *Cyance* reported in 1820 to a House of Representatives Committee on the Slave Trade that slave ships were so completely covered by Spanish papers that it was impossible to

<sup>1</sup> An enormous number, yet this is the figure given in the reproduction of the testimony in the House of Representatives Report No. 348, 1st Session, Twenty-ninth Congress, 1829-1830.

<sup>2</sup> "The ordinary course of proceeding is this: the ship belonging to an unlawful trader calls at Havana or Teneriffe, for the most part at the former port. A nominal sale of ship or cargo is there effected to some Spanish house, and regular Spanish papers and a nominal Spanish captain having been obtained, and her real captain having taken the character of either supercargo or passenger, she sails on her slave-trading expedition as a Spanish ship." House Report No. 348, 1829-1830, p. 137.



condemn them. Parenthetically, it may be remarked that somewhat of an analogy to the situation then existing is seen today in the devices by which intoxicating liquor is smuggled into the United States despite the Constitutional amendment forbidding liquor. The mortality from disease and inhuman treatment on the crowded slave ships was frightful; from one-fourth to one-fifth of the Negroes often died on the voyage. Repeated laws were boldly defied by the slavers who ran their vessels into the swamps, bayous and canals on the Southern coast of the United States, there surreptitiously disposing of their captives who were sent to slave-selling stations in Southern cities.

To deal here with the victorious compromises by which the slave-holding States extended the slavery area would be superfluous. Some vital facts not ordinarily brought out in history will be given attention.

Every person having a passable knowledge of economics knew that slave labor was in actuality more expensive than free labor. Usually this was explained as due to the unintelligent handling of the soil by slave labor and to the fact that the owner had to provide for the slave, feeding, clothing and housing him. But measured by opportunities, the master was generally in a more benighted state than the slave. The slave was deliberately kept in a condition of utter ignorance. It was made a crime in slave States to teach Negroes to read and write. These laws were sometimes, but not often, evaded. As a rule masters knew nothing of the principle of conserving soil by rotating crops. Primitive agricultural implements were used. Distribution of labor was unknown. After toiling in the fields all day, slaves had to cook their own food and do their own washing. On many estates they were forced to exist in small, low, close, filthy huts which were nothing but laboratories of diseases. To the quality of their drinking water hardly any attention was given. Incapacity from fevers and deaths from disease were numerous.



With such a wasteful system why did the South so tenaciously retain and so passionately defend the institution of slavery? Because slavery had become more than a system of labor; it had become ingrained as a distinct guarantee of social superiority, conferring high prestige upon the owners. There were two white classes in the South. Opulent white planters constituted one class. The other class were the "mean whites" or "poor whites" whom necessity drove to do such work as railroad building, street paving, vehicle driving, building ditches, constructing buildings and the like. Rich whites looked down upon them with scorn, witheringly describing them as "working like niggers." Consequently the "poor white," whenever he could, emulated the leisure of the rich by turning into an idler. And at all times, the possession of a slave or two became, as Cairnes wrote in his book "The Slave Power," the poor Southern white man's ambition, opening a way in which he could claim a rank having some resemblance to that of his superiors in the social scale.

The paradoxical situation was thus presented that at the identical time when the American people in the North and West were engaged in extirpating aristocracy and caste, the Southern people were intensifying and glorifying both. Furthermore, Americans of the North and West found that they, in the very act of suppressing one kind of caste, had engrafted another kind, that of race. In States where slavery did not exist, Negroes were subjected to political, not to mention extreme social discriminations. Little or no provision was made in the North for the education of Negro children, and where it was made they were kept in separate schools. Seldom does history mention how Negroes viewed their existing or future condition. Enslaved Negroes were incredulous of any relief for their race. Even free Negroes despaired that the time would ever come in America when the Negro would have any recognized rights as citizens. Observe the deep note of

melancholy resignation in this "Memorial of the Free People of Color to the Citizens of Baltimore," December 11, 1826:

"We reside among you, and yet are strangers; natives and yet not citizens; surrounded by the freest people and most republican institutions in the world, and yet enjoying none of the immunities of freedom. . . . We know it is irremediable here. Our difference of color, the servitude of many and most of our brethren, and the prejudices which these circumstances have naturally occasioned, will not allow us to hope, even if we could desire, to mingle with you one day in the benefits of citizenship. As long as we remain among you, we must (and shall) be content to be a distinct race exposed to the indignities and dangers, physical and moral, to which our situation makes us liable. All that we may expect is to merit, by our peaceful and orderly behavior, your consideration and the protection of your laws. . . .

"Though we are not slaves, we are not free. We do not and never shall participate in the enviable privileges which we continually witness. Beyond a mere subsistence and the impulse of religion, there is nothing to arouse us to the exercise of our faculties, or excite us to the attainment of eminence. Though under the shield of your laws we are partially protected, not totally oppressed, nevertheless our situation will and must inevitably have the effect of crushing, not developing, the capacities that God has given us."

## CHAPTER X

### SLAVERY UPROOTED

Two forces developed in the North and West. Both sought the abolition of slavery but widely differed as to method. One force, comprising a tolerably large number of adherents, believed in gradually emancipating slaves and colonizing them but doing this in such a way as not to interfere unduly with what the Southern States considered their institutions and rights. The other force, at first only a small group, demanded outright abolition of slavery irrespective of any compromising conditions whatever.

The view of the first force was exemplified by the passage by various Northern and Western legislatures, from 1824 to 1830, of resolutions for the gradual but entire emancipation of slaves by colonization, and by the advocacy of a national law freeing children thereafter born of slaves, all of which was to be done with the consent of the slave-holding States. The speech of T. L. Smith in the New York legislature in 1828 upon a resolution to instruct the Senators of that State in Congress to vote for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia was typical of the sentiments generally expressed by the members of the first force. "There *is* but one opinion and there *can* be but one opinion among us," he said, "and that is that slavery is a deep stain upon the character of the country. It is a great moral evil, preying upon the vitals of the Republic. It is at war with the fundamental principles of our government and at variance with the imprescriptable rights of man. But, sir, whilst we all acknowledge the truth of this, let me ask, where is the remedy and how shall we apply it? This subject has engaged much of the serious reflection of the wise and good of our country, and up to this

time it has produced no profitable result. It is yet a problem to be solved. Most sincerely do I wish that the sequel may not prove as fruitless and unprofitable as the search that has been made for the philosopher's stone." In Congress a number of Northern representatives declared that the guilt was the whole nation's and that the Nation owed reparation to the Negro race.

The other force came into action when, in 1832, the New England Anti-Slavery Society was formed. A year later the American Anti-Slavery Society was organized by Bariah Green, Lewis Tappan, John G. Whittier, the poet, and others. It sent out Theodore D. Weld, Samuel J. May and the eloquent Wendell Phillips as lecturers. Both societies had been preceded by the establishment of *The Liberator* by William Lloyd Garrison in Boston in 1831. Beginning with the very first issue of *The Liberator* Garrison announced his uncompromising purpose to free the slaves.

The South declared that the culmination of such propaganda would inevitably be the sundering of the Union. This view, for a time, prevailed in parts of the North. There were riots against uncompromising abolitionists; and on one occasion Garrison was dragged by a mob through the streets of Boston itself.

Ultra-abolitionists were accounted extremists intent upon one purpose at the expense of all other national considerations. Even although many people in the North and West were opposed to slavery, there had ensued, as had been foretold, a lowering of the national fiber. A people aiming at equality could not possibly be compromising toward the enslavement of a race without themselves suffering a demoralizing influence. Instinctively an increasing number of thinking men and women in the North and West felt that the bondage of a race dragged themselves down morally and spiritually. With few exceptions, however, the commercial class discouraged any movement for outright abolition; actuated solely by mercenary aims it wanted no interference

jeopardizing its profitable relations with the South. The churches of the New England States were, in the main, silent upon the subject of slavery except for occasional abstractions. Political parties evaded the issue.

Mexico, by Presidential decree in 1829, abolished slavery. This act did not make much of an impression in the United States. In the South as elsewhere it was regarded as a measure of a temporary executive that might be reversed by the act of another. But it proved to be a permanent act; it was confirmed by the Mexican Congress in 1837, and provided for in the Constitution of Mexico in 1844. The act causing mortification to many Americans at this time was that adopted by the British Parliament in 1833 emancipating slaves in the West Indies, and appropriating £20,000,000 for masters' indemnification. True, this act made no provision for the education or elevation of the freed Negroes. True, also, the question of emancipating slaves in a distant, small island was slight and easy compared to the complex problem in America where slavery was so deeply interwoven with the life of a considerable part of the population in an immense area. Nevertheless, progressive Americans had to face the humiliation of seeing their own country, which had so surpassingly led in movements for religious, political, civil and intellectual freedom, outdone by an Old World monarchy.

Northern attacks and the acknowledgments made by the British emancipation that slavery was wrong caused intense resentment, rising to fury, among Southern slave owners. Smarting under the double blow, they felt themselves constrained to press the assertion that slavery was inherently justifiable.

Southern clergymen in many a sermon expounded Scripture as authorizing it. Elaborate theses, filled with ingenious deductions, were written by Southern college professors imputing to the Creator the intention of subjugating man, and arguing that the coercion of slavery was necessary for property accumulation.



and the providing of comforts and elegancies which (they said) were the essentials of civilization. Southern historians—Robert R. Howison, for example—perverting history into dissertations lauding slavery, denounced “the ravings of fanaticism” and strained themselves in the effort to prove that it had ever been lawful for one mortal to control another as his property. Denying that men were born equal, Southern politicians declared that slavery was the real foundation of the Republic in allowing the white race leisure to develop governing capacity. Some of these politicians derided the free workingmen of the North, often stigmatizing them as “the mudsills of society,” and “the greasy mechanic.” These are but the merest outline of the volumes of superheated lore written and published. All of these advocates maintained that slavery was an uplifting boon to the Negro race in bringing it in contact with civilization.

The sensitiveness of slaveholders to attacks reached the point where their legislatures and other public bodies refused to allow the circulation of newspapers, magazines or books assailing slavery. At the behest of the slaveholding oligarchy having the aid of some auxiliary members from the North and West, the House of Representatives in January, 1837, adopted a resolution ordering that all petitions, memorials, propositions or papers relating in any way to the subject of slavery or the abolition of slavery should not be printed or referred; they were to be laid upon the table and no further action taken. The Massachusetts legislature, on April 12, 1837, denounced this action.

Seeking to reduce the slaveholders' power of inordinate representation, the Massachusetts legislature, in 1843, passed a resolution for an amendment to the Federal Constitution limiting representation to free persons. The minority report of John Quincy Adams and J. R. Giddings, of the House of Representatives Select Committee, described how by reason of its representation of 2,500,000 slaves, valued at \$1,200,000,000, the South

elected many more members than it was properly entitled to. Yet taxation was computed on the basis of whites only. Purporting to be a representation of slaves under the name of persons, the report said, it was a grant of enormous, preponderating power to the owners of slaves; instead of being a representation of slaves, it was a representation of their deadliest enemies—their masters.

“And what has been its practical operation? . . .” the report went on. “The result is seen in the fact that to [at] this day, the President of the United States, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and five out of nine of the judges of the supreme judicial courts of the United States, are not only citizens of the slaveholding states, but individual slaveholders themselves. So are, and constantly have been, with scarcely an exception, all the members of both Houses of Congress from the slaveholding States; and so are, in immensely disproportionate numbers, the commanding officers of the army and navy; the officers of the customs; the registers and receivers of the land offices; and the postmasters throughout the slaveholding States.” Further the report described the vast power of the Speaker of the House of Representatives in appointing all committees and having arbitrary power over rules of procedure. This power was used for the ascendancy of the slaveholding party. The report detailed how from 1789 to 1835 a constant inflow of petitions for the abolition of slavery had been thrust into oblivion by committee action; in the year 1835 alone eighteen memorials had been thus treated.

“Slavery is at war with the nature of man, with patriotism and true democracy,” said the report of Freeman H. Morse, another minority member of the Committee. “Emancipation is destined to move on with majestic tread from North to South until our soil shall nowhere bear the footprint of a slave—

until an American can look his fellow man in the face without a blush that his home is a land of slaves.”

While the slave owners and their mouthpieces were declaring the slave system superior to that of the capitalist wage system in the North, they themselves were giving a convincing demonstration of its utter economic failure. The economic breakdown of the slave system was one of the prime causes leading to a black chapter in American history—the war with Mexico. Allied with that cause was another impulsion, that of the doctrine of America’s “manifest destiny,” a doctrine proclaiming that it was the unalterable mission to extend its domain from ocean to ocean. But “manifest destiny” meant one thing to most of the people of the North and West, and another to the slaveholding oligarchy. To the one it signified peaceful acquisition to be followed by the dissemination of freedom, industry and general culture. The slave owners looked upon it as a warrant for acquisition by force and the spread of slavery. A third cause was the fraudulent obtaining by certain American capitalists of immense areas of land in Texas and other parts of what was then Northern Mexico, titles to which they expected to have validated and did have validated under United States jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

*De Bow’s Review*, published at New Orleans, and the chief agricultural and industrial organ of the South, told how, because of soil exhaustion, the slave owners had to seek new lands in the Southwest, causing incessant migrations. The wealthy planters, able to live on small profits, sometimes bought out the poorer planters, pushing them off. Abandoned farms and villages were numerous in the South. The more intelligent planters applied both to themselves and to their fellow planters the term of “land killers.” As early as 1829 Southern politicians had urged the annexation of Texas and continued the demand for four reasons.

---

<sup>1</sup> The facts as to these land appropriations are narrated in detail in the author’s “History of the Supreme Court of the United States.”

These were: It would afford a new area for slave cultivation; it would increase the price of slaves; it would give longevity to the institution of slavery; it would insure the slave power control over government for all time.

Some of the Northern and Western legislatures, influenced by the doctrine of "manifest destiny," favored the annexation of Texas. Others, such as those of Massachusetts, Vermont and Connecticut, denounced it as an aim to extend and perpetuate the odious institution of slavery and as a design calling for the opposition of all friends of human liberty. The majority of Congress openly, candidly, viewed the Mexican War as a war of conquest, voting down a resolution saying that the war was not waged for that purpose. However plausibly conquest was coated by the term "territorial indemnity" it undeniably was a war of conquest.

The New Hampshire legislature, on July 10, 1846, declaring that forbearance had ceased to be a virtue, passed a resolution denouncing the imperious and formidable encroachments of slavery, and announced that it would coöperate with all friends of civil liberty in the extermination of that terrible scourge, human slavery. Four months later the Vermont legislature passed a resolution condemning the Mexican War as an offensive one against a neighboring republic, and pledged Vermont to use every Constitutional means to avert the extension of slavery. The legislatures of Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania all by resolution remonstrated against the annexation of new territory unless slavery was irrevocably prohibited. General U. S. Grant, serving in the war against Mexico, regarded that war, as he wrote in his "Memoirs," as a conspiracy to acquire territory from which new slave States could be formed. Demands in Congress for an investigation of the causes of the war were stifled by cries of "Treason!"

Writing of the idealism of the American people, we are, at



the same time, scrupulously adhering to accurate history, and making no attempt to palliate any fact however discreditable.

A remarkable fact was stated by Senator Dix of New York in the United States Senate, on February 28, 1849. His statements are confirmed by consulting the diplomatic correspondence in Document No. 52, Vol. 7 of the U. S. Senate Documents, Thirtieth Congress, First Session, 1847-49. Senator Dix said that in the peace negotiations with N. P. Trist, U. S. Commissioner, the Mexican Commissioners at the Peace Conference sought to have the United States stipulate not to permit slavery in the territory to be ceded by the treaty but that Trist refused.

"These Mexicans," Senator Dix said, "whom we have been accustomed to consider half civilized, vanquished in the field, driven from the capital, compelled to make peace with us almost on our own terms, and forced to cede a portion of their territory, implore us not to carry slavery into it. Sir, I ask how should we stand before the world, liberal and enlightened as we are, proclaiming the principle of human liberty as one of the inherent rights of our race, if we were to disregard those entreaties?"

In a confidential letter (No. 15) written by Trist to Secretary of State Buchanan on September 4, 1847, from Tacubaya, headquarters of the U. S. Army, Trist said that the Mexican Commissioners had proposed excluding slavery from ceded territory but that he, Trist, had told them that the proposal would be ineffectual. "I concluded by assuring them," Trist further wrote, "that the bare *mention* of the subject in any treaty to which the United States was a party, was an absolute impossibility; that no President of the United States would dare to present any such treaty to the Senate; and that if it were in their power to offer me the whole territory described in our project, increased tenfold in value, and in addition to that, covered a foot thick all over with pure gold, upon the single condition that slavery should



be excluded therefrom, I could not entertain the offer for a moment, nor even think of communicating it to Washington. The matter ended in their being fully satisfied that this topic was one not to be touched, and it was dropped with good feeling on both sides."

That the United States paid for territorial acquisitions made in this war—an unprecedented action in the annals of victorious nations—did not change the fact that the Mexican War was one of conquest.

A long-enduring legacy of resentment was left in Mexico by this war. When the vast territory ceded in the treaty by that country became incorporated in the United States, it seemed as if the slaveholders' power was so mighty that it could never be broken. For more than a decade after this many an American thought the prospect dismal if not hopeless. To the slaves it was unutterably dark. Gerrit Smith, a noted abolitionist, wrote of slavery on August 27, 1859: "So debauched are the white people that there is not enough virtue left in them to put it down. If I do not misinterpret the words and looks of the most intelligent and noble of the black men who fall in my way, they have come to despair of the accomplishment of this work by the white people. The feeling among the blacks that they must deliver themselves gains strength with fearful rapidity. . . ."

Yet only six years after this doleful utterance, the slaveholding oligarchy which had been responsible for the Mexican War and which had so long dominated, was irreparably crushed.

Here, parenthetically, it should be pointed out that the first act of the United States after the Civil War was to go to the assistance of Mexico. Believing that the Civil War was the prelude to the downfall of the American Republic, Emperor Napoleon III of France had taken advantage of the occasion to send a French army to Mexico. Its nominal errand was to

protect French residents against acts of violence and to obtain redress, but its actual mission was to establish an imperial government in Mexico, with Archduke Maximilian of the reigning family of Austria as emperor.

Napoleon III pretended that the Mexicans had elected Maximilian. While the Civil War was in progress he was able to assert his pretensions. When it was over, the United States Government, its hands freed, at once proceeded to take measures to release Mexico. The usurpation by Maximilian, backed by a French army, was viewed by Americans as nothing more or less than a resurrected design of the old Holy Alliance, with its claim to divine right and autocracy. The French people were not held responsible for the sinister enterprise; it was rightly imputed to the government of Napoleon III who was promoting it for the aggrandizement of one of the three imperial families which had formed the Holy Alliance.

The American Government refused to recognize Maximilian's pretended election. It notified Napoleon that the presence of a European army in Mexico, maintaining a European prince in power without Mexico's consent and against its will, could not be tolerated. Such an invasion was deemed to be a source of apprehension and danger not alone to the United States but to all republics upon the American continent. The United States Government demanded that the French troops be withdrawn. Napoleon III was forced to comply. The Mexicans recovered control of their government and Maximilian was shot.

It is needless to encumber this book with a recital of the political events reaching a climax with the election of Abraham Lincoln as President and the Civil War conflict. Abundantly told, they are familiar. All-important to the subject here is the focusing of attention upon the issues determined by the great Civil War. They more than comprised the question of secession

and slavery. Inextricably they involved the colliding of two entirely dissimilar sets of ideas, irreconcilable by their nature and affecting the destiny of all races.

In the non-slavery States the pervading spirit was one of buoyancy, alertness, exuberance, joyous visioning of the future. Torpor and decay characterized the mentality of the slave States. Having overthrown aristocracy and squelched its ideas, the people of the free States exulted in the dignity of doing useful service. Labor there, as William Jay wrote in 1853, was regarded as "the proper and commendable means of acquiring wealth; and our most influential men would in no degree suffer in public estimation for holding the plow or even repairing the highways." But in the slave States bodily labor was considered disreputable; to attempt to give the laborer, either white or black, a cultivated understanding was thought preposterous.

Furthermore, depending as it did upon the support of the "poor whites" to vote it power and fight its battles, the slaveholding oligarchy adopted the deliberate policy of denying them education. While the American people North and West were indomitably pushing their great projects for mass education, the slave oligarchy retained the old monarchical and aristocratic fear of the people, and summoned the ally ignorance to its aid. Knowledge being power, they wanted no class to possess it but themselves, and in the very act of keeping it from others, they deprived themselves of it.

As we have shown, they, an agricultural community, did not even know how to care for their soil. Eulogizing slavery as essential to generate a class having the leisure for intellectual attainments, they could demonstrate the leisure and the elegance of manners but little of intellect. In the States where slavery prevailed the degree of illiteracy among the white population as revealed by census returns was astonishingly high. "Mental ste-

rility preëminently stamps the pro-slavery States," wrote a European observer, Adam G. DeGurowski, in his book, "America and Europe," in 1857, after a study of the United States. "In the boundless expanse of the human mind, the slavery region alone gives no sign of a healthy intellectual activity. It is a dark speck on the auroral horizon of literary America. Science, scholarship, mechanics, inventions, poetry, arts, in one word, the domain of intuitions, of knowledge, as well as that of imagination, belongs almost exclusively to New England and the other free States. The South is a withered desert."

These facts are not given for the purpose of rekindling old issues, but to show that in fighting the Civil War the people of the North and West were, in a very large measure, continuing their great struggle against monarchy, aristocracy and the constriction of class education. "The South is artistocratic, verging close upon monarchy," declared Henry Ward Beecher in one of his addresses during the Civil War. The aristocratic classes in England were virulently opposed to the cause for which the people of the North and West were fighting. The *Saturday Review*, an organ of those classes, had the frankness to say that its opposition was not because it disliked Americans, but because it found the leaven of American ideas and principles working in Great Britain, and in order to defeat those ideas it was necessary to attack the country responsible for them.

The bulk of the American people of the North and West were fully conscious that they were fighting for the existence of their own idealism. E. E. White, Commissioner of the Common Schools of Ohio, wrote in his annual report for 1865 that the war had afforded such a terrible and conclusive demonstration of the abiding strength of the nation that patriotic men everywhere bid the common school a hearty god-speed. "Had the great body of our people failed to comprehend the issues involved in this momentous struggle for national unity and freedom, as they must



have failed but for the common school, how changed would now be the situation of our national affairs! . . . How effectively have European dogmas of aristocracy been riddled during these four years of war. . . .”

A similar pæan came from the Superintendent of Public Instruction of Illinois. His biennial report for 1865-66 told how the national flag floated from nearly every college, seminary and high school building in the State “and woe befell the man or boy who dared to haul it down.” The report pointed out: “Apart from the lessons of the past six years, none is more worthy of notice in this report than the revelation we have seen of the vitalizing power of popular education upon the national armies in times of war. It has demonstrated the alliance of learning and patriotism, and the relation of mental discipline to successful military achievement. . . . It is safe to say that never before were such vast armies assembled of whom so large a proportion could read and write, while the number of well-educated, and even liberally educated soldiers in the Union army was entirely without precedent. All classes of our educational institutions contributed their quota from the university and college down to the academy and high school. In many instances, whole classes enlisted and marched to the front, with their professors and teachers at their head; and in more than one case there was no college ‘commencement’ at all, the seniors having left to the last man to fight for their country.”

It is only when we consider the full character of the connected great issues for which they fought that we can grasp the complete significance of Lincoln’s imperishable address on the battlefield of Gettysburg.

A total of 2,774,000 men, including nearly 179,000 Negro soldiers, were enrolled in the Union armies; 302,222 met death during the Civil War. This mortality did not comprise losses among Union sailors and marines. Of the more than 1,000,000



men in the Confederate armies the number of deaths probably equaled that of Union soldiers; no accurate data exist.

The war had scarcely ended when demands were voiced in the North that the United States should have a national system of education not only to insure every child an education but to school the four millions of liberated slaves. "They ask it at our hands," urged a pamphlet issued by the Loyal Publication Society in 1865, "and the world expects us to do it, because in the very act of emancipation, there is the sacred promise to educate. . . . We are to be the leading Republic of the world, and we are bound by that fact to be an example to the rest. We shall be traitors to our trust if we do not publish to all nations a type of national character higher than any yet known. . . . We can now, for the first time, meet the demands of humanity, civilization and freedom. We can not only teach the Negroes, but we can emancipate the 'poor whites' whom ignorance has so long kept in bondage." . . . There were other ardent pronouncements to the same effect.

So slavery was obliterated, and the Negro stepped forth recognized in law at least as a citizen. The white people of the South were in a state of intense consternation over the sudden transformation of vast numbers of Negroes into voters. They complained bitterly of domination by Negro legislatures during reconstruction years when Federal military forces patrolled the South. Yet it is an incontrovertible fact that it was those Negro-controlled legislatures, with an infusion of white "carpet-bagger" interlopers from the North, which from 1868 to 1873 first provided laws for public schools in the South. Before this time there were in general no common schools whatever there. Persistently the Southern white people condemned as unfair the abrupt conversion into voters of a race having no training for the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. On the other hand, Negro leaders say to this day that if the Negroes had been

left a servile caste, personally free but politically powerless, they could neither have initiated common schools, nor would schools have been provided even partially for them by the Southern States.

The Federal Government gave assistance for Negro education. Likewise Northern philanthropy the funds of which are still used for the purpose. But necessarily the large work of supplying educational facilities had to be carried on by the States as a continuous measure of public policy.

The argument long used by the more representative whites of the South was that the fear of political domination was the great impediment to their making generous provision for Negro schools. With this fear removed, they promised, the white people would be put upon their honor to treat the Negro race with helpful understanding. From 1890 to 1900 seven Southern States passed laws which, by imposing various literacy, occupational and other tests and qualifications, operated in effect to deprive 5,500,000 Negroes of the right to vote. Southern Negro educators claimed that the better class of whites, although meaning well, did not fulfill their promise. This class found itself compelled, for reasons of political expediency, to cater to the mass of Southern whites who, Negro leaders said, were in competition with the Negro and unwilling to increase his opportunities for advancement.

As proof of their contention, Negro leaders and associations pointed out how Negro schools were crippled by curtailment of appropriations. A true accusation, this, so true that Southern white superintendents of schools protested against the discrimination by which Negro schools received only a small share of the educational funds raised by general taxation. But so thoroughly had the American ideal of self-development seeped into the minds of many Negroes, that frequently they set about establishing their own schools, maintained at their own expense. This

virtually entailed their being subjected to double taxation. And where reason could not influence their opponents, economic pressure often did. In various sections white farmers refused to allow Negro schools. They quickly acceded when they found that large numbers of the best Negro tenants and laborers migrated to sections where their children could have school advantages.

At the close of the Civil War few of the millions of Southern Negroes could read or write. In 1880 fully 70 per cent. were illiterate. A discouragingly slow, halting process the education of the mass seemed. Forty years pass and what do we see? In 1920—so the U. S. Census states—the proportion of Negro illiteracy in the South had gone down to 25 per cent. in two heavily populated Negro regions, and to less than 28 per cent. in another Negro congested division.<sup>2</sup> This, too, applying to a far greater Negro population than in 1880; nearly nine millions of that race were concentrated in the South and Southwestern States alone in 1920. We may fairly ask: Would not the degree of illiteracy have been lower still had not obstacles been put in their way?

The glimmerings of another transformation are visible. Slaves before the Civil War, held to be feeble wards of the nation after that event, the Negro is now beginning to assert his dignity as a Negro man, as an American Negro man, conscious of his racial separation yet no longer overcome by a lowly sense of fated inferiority. This change is evidenced by many current indications. What true American can object? Were not the mass of whites once serfs? Were not Americans once subjects; and did they not glory when, in fighting for the precious rights of manhood and womanhood, they became citizens? Prejudice against the Negro has been strong, and all the stranger recalling

<sup>2</sup> Negro illiteracy in 1920 in the South Atlantic States was 25.2 per cent. of a Negro population of 4,325,120; in the East South Central States it was 27.9 per cent. of a Negro population of 2,523,532; in the West South Central States it was 25.3 per cent. of a Negro population of 2,063,579.

that he never came to America voluntarily. The American people were the first to proclaim the inherent dignity of man—a dignity in no way dependent upon title, rank or station. Granting character, intellect, general worth, can color be made an everlasting dividing line? Remain it may as a social barrier, but it has not prevented and will not estop mental and moral elevation.

## CHAPTER XI

### HOSTILITY TO SERVILE ART

To account for the slowness with which the arts developed in America the invariable explanation has been that it was because the people were engrossed in clearing and settling the country. Only partly correct, this explanation omits the salient point. Assuredly the utilitarian did precede the artistic; how could it have been otherwise? But the striking fact was that the American people had distinct prejudices not so much against the arts as against the traditional spirit behind the arts. For these prejudices they had definite reasons, some of a religious and moral, others of a political and social nature. These reasons were intimately bound with the new democratic civilization that they were creating.

In all times and in all places the essentials of art remain the same. This is a truism. The difference lies in the application of the arts. And herein lay the sixth great accomplishment of the American people. It democratized both artists and arts. It changed the arts from a thing which had long ministered to a privileged few into a popular institution of culture.

From the outset Puritans had an admitted deep prejudice against the part played by the arts, especially the decorative arts. For this there were two large reasons.

The first was a religious objection. With their austere ideas of simplicity in church service, Puritans looked upon the arts as, in a large measure, a slavish auxiliary to their enemy the Roman Catholic Church. To the Puritan view Rome arrayed its churches everywhere in shining garments and gorgeous trappings; it strove to make its religion fashionable and sensory; it



built its stately cathedrals, adorning them with statues and jewel and tinsel, and it hired the most expensive and superb music. The Puritan charge was that pompous displays of every kind blasphemed real religious zeal and indeed savored of idolatry.

Allied with the religious horror with which Puritans regarded ostentation was another feeling of a religious and moral compound. It proscribed some branches of the arts as pagan in character. To Puritans nude figures were repulsive. They seemed a perpetuation of the old pagan régime of sheer worship of flesh, incarnating, in addition, the dissoluteness of both pagan times and of modern courts and palaces. They were condemned as instigated by Satan. As we have seen, Puritan influence was not restricted to New England. In various ways it permeated many of the colonies. But the immediate practical results were most noticeable in New England. There, no youth of however an artistic turn of mind, was encouraged to study the decorative arts. For talent the chief profession open was the ministry. This was revered the supreme field of service and distinction.

The second general reason for the prejudice against art and artists applied not only to Puritans but to other sections of the American people. A mixed political and social reason, it was part of their conflict against Old World ideas and institutions.

What, as the American saw it, was the status of art and artists in Europe? Dependent upon the favor of the powerful few, artists of every kind, with rare exceptions, were sodden with the caste spirit. Only too eager to get an entrée into courts and princely mansions they more than sought the patronage of rulers and courtiers; they intrigued for it and prized it above all else. They absorbed the monarchical and aristocratic view that only the cultivated few had the capacity to appreciate the productions of art, and that it was the rankest nonsense to suppose that the multitude could ever rise to the point of understanding. No stretch of the truth is it to say that if any possible means had

existed to shut off sculpture or architecture from what was scorned as the vulgar view, it probably would have been done, for both sculptor and architect shared the caste ideas of their fellow artists. Equestrian statues and many a structure were erected in Europe solely for the aggrandizement of some august personage. This was, in fact, one of the indictments made by Americans after they had overthrown monarchy and were extinguishing caste aristocracy; namely, that artists too often used their talents to exalt those very institutions, and did it because they believed in them as much as for reward.

Of all the arts, literature in some countries showed some independence of spirit, some searching after free inquiry. It, too, was often dependent upon the patronage of the powerful, but in notable instances writers imperiled themselves for the sake of free expression. In England, France and some other countries they were not infrequently imprisoned. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth an old English law was revived to cut off the right hand of a pamphleteer whose printed objections to her rumored marriage with a non-Protestant incurred her displeasure. But in America literary men, although guaranteed full liberty of expression, long remained enslaved, as we shall see, to European conventions and traditions.

The sycophancy of artists to royalty and aristocracy was a mooted subject before the American Revolution. It was the thesis of a debate, for example, at the College of New Jersey, September 24, 1766, on this proposition: "Civil Liberty is necessary to give birth to the Arts and Sciences." Both immediately before and after the Revolution the conduct and views of the more prominent of the few American artists grievously affronted the American populace. American artists going to Europe for art development sought by obsequiousness as much as by talent to obtain the patronage of royalty and aristocracy, and securing it gloried in it. Many Americans firmly believed that these artists

secretly if not openly shared the derision with which monarchies were assailing America's republican form of government.

It is no exaggeration to describe Benjamin West as an unmitigated fawner upon royalty. He was long King George's "court painter and favorite"; his correspondence abounds with evidences of toadyism. John S. Copley brought back to America aristocratic isolation and undisguised homage for rank. "The patrician element still carried honorable sway in the New World, and ere its external signs were lost in republican sameness of bearing and costume, the pencil of Copley snatched them from oblivion by a faithful transfer to canvas." So a biographer complacently wrote, telling at the same time that Copley "seems never to have come into any vivid relation with nature, but painted with studious regard to established rules and conventional propriety." This meant the flattering of the rich in portraiture; it yielded Copley a most handsome income. Returning to Europe, Copley, after sundry travels there, finally settled in England after 1775. His son became Lord Lyndhurst, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain. Gilbert Stuart and John Trumbull did have American sentiments and painted American portraits and historical subjects, yet neither had any conception of democracy in art. And so through the roll of the early American painters, all educated in Europe and more or less infected with the European atmosphere.

To Americans of today with a democracy solidly established and generally imitated throughout great parts of the world, this prejudice against a European training may seem to have been abnormal. Art is art, and why cavil at learning wherever it may be obtained? But to Americans of a century or more ago the objections were most vital. America had established and was developing a democracy in the face of sneers from the ruling classes everywhere. It wanted its youth educated at home. We have seen how the American people established and richly

endowed universities so that promising youths would not have to study in foreign lands and imbibe alien ideas. In the minds of many Americans the art life in Europe was identified with servility to old institutions.

At the same time Americans were subjected to exasperating attacks from Europeans representing various branches of the arts. "Moore, the poet, informs us that in America nature has done everything and man nothing," protested an article in the December, 1811, issue of the *Portfolio Magazine*, published in New York City. "That the people, from the form of government and the influence of republican sentiments, are strangers to taste, refinement and the arts of imagination; are vulgar, unsocial, insolent and avaricious. But these censures are perfectly mild and merciful compared to the animadversions of a Prussian traveler, by the name of Bulow. This arrogant, illiberal and conceited foreigner not only pronounces the manners of the American people rude and ferocious, but their hearts narrow, selfish and corrupt to the core. The first settlers of America he is pleased to denominate the rabble and offscourings of the earth, whose principles and vices have descended to their posterity. The American Revolution he declares to have been prompted by no generous or praiseworthy motives, to have been dignified by no lofty or magnanimous feelings, and to have been conducted to its termination without ability, spirit or patriotism; that science and genius are scarcely to have been found in the country; and that the people are a mean, groveling, avaricious and barbarous herd, without sense or hospitality."

This is merely one specimen of the many onslaughts of vituperation and of the indignation they aroused in America. They were regarded, and justly so, as all parts of a campaign to discredit American democracy. Consequently the attitude of large parts of the American people was one of deep suspicion of the arts as an instrument of monarchy and aristocracy. Americans



had no patience with any art used for the purpose of reviling them and their ideas. This was aptly illustrated in the case of Joseph Dennie. He was a brilliant American essayist. But he employed his powers to scoff at America's institutions and social order. He was cursed and driven into oblivion. As Gulian Verplanck said in an address after his death, writings such as Dennie's identified in the minds of many the cause of literature with attachments to foreign establishments and principles. "Honest men reasoned, and correctly, too, though from false premises," Verplanck said, "that if literature could be gained only at the expense of patriotic feeling, it was best that we should go without it."

So deep were American prejudices that the time soon came when American artists had to take serious note of it and revise their whole point of view to make it accord with the national aspirations. In the process artists themselves were elevated. Asserting the American spirit they began to rebel against the entire ancient thralldom of patronage, and stand on their own feet as men and artists.

Long before the great utilitarian work of building steam-driven factories or railroads had begun—in fact, when many Americans themselves believed that the time was not yet ripe for the native development of art—distinct academies of fine arts were established. The inception of the first of these, the New York Academy of Fine Arts, originally under the name of the American Academy of the Arts, was in 1802, although it was not actually chartered until 1808. The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts was established in 1805, and chartered the next year. "It is an old Quaker trick, repeated incalculable times," wrote a Philadelphia chronicler, "to watch furtively the liberal schemes of other communities, and then, when the originals have done their best, to come forward like a rich comedy uncle, and



better the institution with a more plethoric purse or a more numerous contribution."

The first meeting of the projectors of the Pennsylvania Academy was held in Independence Hall. Both they as well as the promoters of the New York Academy of the Fine Arts were affected, perhaps to some extent unconsciously, by European ideas in more than one respect. To those men art and the artist necessarily had to have patrons. Of the seventy "patrons" of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, forty-one were lawyers and nearly all of the remainder were merchants. Only two—William Rush and Charles Willson Peale—were artists. George Clymer, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was elected president. The institution was a stockholders' affair, its object was "to promote the cultivation of the fine arts in the United States of America, by introducing correct and elegant copies from works of the first masters in sculpture and painting."

"The art clique in New York had no very good lion," chuckled the old chronicler already quoted. "The Philadelphians had a first-rate one—Benjamin West—and he was exploited immediately." Notified that he was elected an honorary member, West took weeks to write his acceptance. His entry, however, did not excite elation among Americans in general who did not forget his sycophancy to royalty. A domed building was erected, and upon its completion in 1806, the first exhibition was held, Clymer making the opening address. Copied antiques from Europe with Shakesperean paintings by West and some other European canvasses comprised the exhibition. To quote the old chronicler again: "The public paid twenty-five cents a head to enter, and the Mondays, in consideration of the unblushing plaster casts from the Louvre, were set apart with tender gallantry for ladies exclusively." This was the origin of the Philadelphia institution which has perpetuated itself to this day. It did

not encounter the stormy experiences befalling the New York Academy of the Fine Arts.

In his annual discourse before the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1810, Joseph Hopkinson (we quote from the December, 1810, *Supplement to the Portfolio Magazine*) denounced the European reviling of America. "The fastidious arrogance with which the reviewers of Great Britain treat the genius and intellect of this country is equaled by nothing but their profound ignorance of its true situation. Our literature, taste, morals and progress in the arts are subjects of the most illiberal sarcasm and abuse." After further reviewing the foreign attitude, Hopkinson declared: "Political independence is necessary to the culture and growth of the arts. A nation in a state of vassalage cannot excel in them. The mind must be free as air, dreading the inspection of no jealous master. The ardor of genius must not be chilled by conscious dependence, nor its flights limited by the weight of chains."

Similar remarks were made by George Murray, an engraver, before the Society of Artists of the United States at Philadelphia, on August 1, 1810. Here we further quote from the *Portfolio Magazine* of September, 1810. The Society, Murray said, had been formed for giving instruction in art and various other objects, "but the most important object is to remove existing prejudices, and to give a character to the fine arts in the United States." He went on: "The political institutions of France as well as Great Britain being founded upon injustice and supported by force, their rulers cannot see with indifference the rapid rise of a young and powerful nation, where the government is both the choice and the idol of the people securing equal rights and privileges to all. A country enjoying so many important advantages must continue to attract the subjects of foreign despotisms, and finally to rival them in arts as well as in commerce."

Apparently, the artists of Philadelphia had organized the

Society of Artists of the United States not only to teach art but to give their own exhibitions. But their chief aim was to overcome existing prejudices. In a long oration (published later as a pamphlet) B. Henry Latrobe, on May 8, 1811, pressed this fact. He was an architect and one of the vice-presidents of the society. He declared: "But at the opening of this infant institution, instruction in the study or in the practice of any of the fine arts is less necessary than the labor of proving that the arts have not an injurious but a beneficent effect upon the morals and even upon the liberties of our country. For we cannot disguise from ourselves that, far from enjoying the support of the general voice of the people, our national prejudices are unfavorable to the fine arts. Many of our citizens who do not fear that they will enervate our minds and corrupt the simple and republican character of our pursuits and enjoyments, consider the actual state of society as unfit for their introduction; more dread a high grade of perfection in the fine arts as the certain indication of the loss of political liberty. . . ."

Latrobe went on: "But if in painting and sculpture the American public has as yet done nothing for the arts, our necessities and our pride have been more favorable to the advancement of our skill in architecture. It is indeed to be regretted that instead of adapting our architecture to the age of our society and of our institutions, and exhibiting in our public edifices that republican simplicity which we profess, some of the most magnificent situations in our country and in the world should be already irrevocably occupied by structures copied from the palaces of the corrupt age of Diocletian, or the still more absurd and debased taste of Louis XIV."

Arguing at length upon the falsity of the opinion that perfection of the fine arts was incompatible with freedom, Latrobe predicted that "the taste for the fine arts, when it shall have

become a national taste, will be as permanent as the national language."

The New York Academy of the Fine Arts was started as a singular mixture of art patronization and commercialism. Its incorporators were Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, DeWitt Clinton, John Trumbull, John R. Murray, William Cutting, Lewis Simond and a few others. Of these, only one—Trumbull—was an artist. Some of these incorporators were sincerely interested in the promotion of the arts, but their ideas were a medley of European borrowings linked with the stockholding plan then such an indiscriminating passion with the commercial class. The incorporating act of 1808 provided that the capital stock of the American (or New York) Academy of the Fine Arts should be not more than one thousand shares, each share to be of the value of \$25, and each share to be entitled to a vote at any election. This was putting into execution in the domain of art the prevalent political and commercial axiom that voting should be done not by men but by money. The act of 1808 was to remain in force for twenty-five years.

At one time there were one hundred and forty-three member stockholders, mainly lawyers, politicians, large landholders and merchants. The list comprised Aaron Burr, John Jacob Astor, Robert Fulton, Rufus King, Cadwallader D. Colden, Frederick de Puyster, Stephen Van Rensselaer, George Clinton, Daniel D. Tompkins and similar others.

When elected the first president of the New York Academy of the Fine Arts, Robert R. Livingston was American Ambassador in Paris. He sent over a dozen plaster casts with as many plaster busts copied from the statuary then assembled at the Louvre. Upon their arrival in New York City, these were exhibited in a circus building on Greenwich Street. It was found impossible to interest the public. The casts were then removed to the customhouse and again exhibited with the same result. They



were then packed and remained in cases for eight years during which time the New York Academy of the Fine Arts was in a dormant condition.

In 1816 an attempt was made to revive public interest in it. On October 23 of that year DeWitt Clinton made an address before the Academy. Reason, he said, was necessary to remove strong prejudices existing against the Academy, for it was believed by many that the state of American society and the form of American government "are unfriendly to the encouragement of the fine arts." He continued: "A republican government, instead of being unfriendly to the growth of the fine arts, is the appropriate soil for their cultivation. . . . The privileged orders which prevail in civilized monarchies are hostile to the high prerogatives of intellect. They create a barrier against the ascent of genius to the highest stations, and they cast the most distinguished talents and the most exalted endowments in the background." What Clinton meant by this was that in Europe the veriest titled degenerate far outranked intellect in the social scale. But, Clinton declared, America with its wild, romantic and awful scenery would arouse and exalt the artist's imagination. "No country is better calculated to do it. Here we have the beautiful, the wonderful, the sublime. Here Nature has conducted her operations on a magnificent scale. . . . Also we have our own history to paint. No longer will the artist be compelled to seek foreign lands for encouragement and subjects." Clinton's address was published in pamphlet form.

An exhibition was held in a vacated almshouse on Chambers Street, New York City. There were twenty-eight statues, busts and bas-reliefs. Only a few were not of the classical order—busts of Washington, Hamilton, Clinton, West and three of Napoleon. The remainder were all copy casts of "Venus of the Capitol," "Venus of the Bath," "The Young Apollo," "Laocoön and his Sons," "Castor and Pollux," "Grecian Cupid," "Mercury



in Bronze," busts of Jupiter, Juno, Bacchus, Homer, Lucretia, Pythagoras, Euripedes, Socrates, Plato, Demosthenes, Nero, Seneca, Germanicus and other classical subjects. Most of the forty-five paintings were copies. There was Paul Veronese's "The Feast at the House of Levi," Titian's "The Scourging of Christ," Rubens' "The Elevation of the Cross," Caravaggio's "Bearing the Body of Christ to the Sepulchre," and sundry others depicting religious subjects or European landscapes, portraits and scenes. The only two American artists exhibiting were Trumbull and Vanderlyn. Trumbull had five paintings—"The Woman Taken in Adultery," "Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me," "The Knighting of De Wilton," "Peter the Great at Narva," and "The Virgin, Infant Christ and St. John," the latter suggested by one of Raphael's paintings. Vanderlyn's paintings were the "Death of Miss McCrea" and a "Portrait of Chancellor Livingston." The Academy's library consisted of engravings, engraved views and colored designs, twenty-four volumes of Paranesi on Roman Antiquities presented by Napoleon, a gallery of books donated by Lucien Bonaparte, and divers other books on art, painting, costumes of various nations, anatomy and cognate subjects.

The directors of the New York Academy of the Fine Arts now seemed to be aware that something was egregiously amiss in their own organization. It had an ample list of men of "prominent names" but almost no artists.

To secure these and to provide a way of obtaining material for exhibitions, a set of by-laws were approved on December 18, 1816. The European academician custom was adopted. The directors were empowered to select from the stockholders not more than twenty-five persons who were to be designated Academicians of the American Academy of Arts. "They shall be men of good moral character and artists by profession, that is to say, painters, sculptors, architects or engravers." Every Academician

was required, within a year after his election, to deposit with the Academy "a specimen of his talents" which was to remain the Academy's property. Non-compliance with this regulation was to be deemed a voluntary renunciation of his election as an Academician. The directors were also authorized to elect not more than twenty Associate Academicians, also to be artists and to contribute specimens of their work. No person could be elected an Academician who was not an Associate Academician.

Honorary members were also provided for. There were twenty-nine of these. Heading the list were Napoleon Bonaparte and Lucien Bonaparte. Others were Vivant Denon and Barbe Marbois of Paris, Benjamin West, Gilbert Stuart, B. W. Latrobe, Thomas Sully (the same Sully who "seems to paint only ladies and gentlemen"); Rembrandt Peale and various sculptors and other painters mostly European or resident in Europe. There was one architect, George Hatfield, of Washington, D. C. Major-General Winfield Scott was an honorary member.

The by-laws further called for two annual exhibitions, one in the spring, the other in the fall. "All artists of distinguished merit shall be permitted to exhibit their works. Amateurs are invited to exhibit, too, works of merit." To those not entitled to free entry, the price of admission was fixed at twenty-five cents; the price of a catalogue at twelve and a half cents.

An art school was supposed to be a part of the New York Academy of the Fine Arts. In 1817 John Trumbull was president of that institution. "The pupils," says an old account, "who complained to President Trumbull that they had to wait for hours for the keeper to open the building and give them access to the models, were answered by the painter of 'Bunker Hill' that students had no property rights in these importations, and that beggars must not be choosers. The urbanity, of which this was an exhibition, decimated the classes, and the Academy dwindled to imperceptibility."

So instilled was public prejudice against the spirit embodied in art and artists, that continuously promoters of art exhibitions had to beseech consideration for the arts. The impressive point of these pleas was that they were double edged. On the one hand they contained an implied criticism of those artists who still furtively held the traditional idea that to prosper artists must have the favor and bounty of the exalted. The pleas, on the other hand, assured the people in the strongest terms that the artist and his work were the real sufferers under monarchies, and that there was no reason why art could not attain its fullest splendors under a republic. Thus in his address at the opening of the twelfth exhibition of the New York Academy of Fine Arts, M. Charles Patterson declared: "But it is said that Art can alone flourish under the munificent patronage of powerful and arbitrary governments—that to them we owe Poussin and Le Brun; let us answer with all the deference that is due their merit, that they have established their own servility and paralyzed their talents in the repeated and fulsome representation of mere royalty and its satellites. We are, it is true, a practical people, engaged in all the active and diversified pursuits of busy life. But was it not among scenes like these that poets and philosophers and artists grew up in ancient republics?"

## CHAPTER XII

### ART CASTS OFF PATRONAGE

"THE arts must be freed from the shame of patronage!" This was the slogan of a revolting group of artists, mainly the younger element, when in 1825 they founded the National Academy of Design in New York City. Some were seceders from the American (or New York) Academy of the Fine Arts; others were unattached recruits.

Leading the movement was Samuel F. B. Morse. No man was more thoroughly devoted to American principles as his action on this occasion and his later activities showed. He and some of the other revolvers had followed the prescribed mode of studies in Europe. But having gone there infused with an American sense of independence, they were repelled by what they saw and returned in an insurrectionary mood.

To them personally the patronage idea was nauseating; as a feature in American national life they thought it ridiculously out of place. It degraded artists, undermined the integrity of the arts, and was a disgrace to the American spirit. In Europe it was an accepted fixture; but what possible reason could there be for its existence in a country the whole tenor of the life of which was on opposite lines? What, they asked, could be more audacious than a crew of outsiders decking themselves with the grandiose title and airs of "patrons of art"? Yet this is what the stockholders of the American Academy of Fine Arts had done and were doing. That some of these men were sincerely interested in encouraging art (according to their way) did not alter the facts; the majority of the stockholders were mere pretenders. In the Old World artists had long abased themselves

before power, title and rank. Were they now to cringe to money in the New World?

The art ideas of Morse and his associates were the first expression approximating the attitude of the body of Americans. The only difference was that the one thought more in terms of art, and the other in those of political, social and moral significance.

To those rebellious young American painters the art atmosphere of Europe had no claims for blind worship and slavish imitation. For the most part it represented a dead art, a relic of defunct eras. The subject matter and treatment appropriate to a mythological, theological or despotic age were anything but suitable to the spirit of new times, conditions and places. Yet to such an extreme did this veneration of the past go in Europe that it became a frenzy which, as a thing of fashion, was promptly taken up by the American aristocracy. Fabricators of spurious "old masters" did a lucrative business in Europe. In our own time there is an eager competition to obtain specimens of the art of past centuries, but their status is somewhat different from that of a hundred years ago. Then they were sought and valued almost to the point of excluding contemporary work, particularly of a new style, whereas now modern work receives much greater consideration.

Was it in Europe only, in such surroundings, that American aspirants could study? The founders of the National Academy of Design denied this time-serving proposition. They declared that effective teaching could be done in America itself. Here was an environment which would surely develop an original style of art eliminating European formalism. To us this does not seem a revolutionary proposal. It was such to the aristocratic and fashionable Americans of Morse's time. They disparaged everything American, apparel as well as paintings, priding themselves upon the fact that their outfits were imported. Their



view of the artist was contemptuously simple; they classed him as something approaching a monger of wares to whom they were doing a favor if they even granted an audience. From American artists, unless they were flattering portrait and "fancy" painters, they refused to buy anything. Apart from these productions, their "art" possessions were copies of "old masters." Morse and his group demanded that the artist take his proper high place; he must completely shed all fawning and undervaluation, and proclaim the fact that his culture and talents outmatched any superficial pretensions of rank or wealth.

The assertion has invariably been made and allowed to pass unchallenged that the American people then and for a long time thereafter were callous to the arts. In a conditional sense only was this true. To the national life then unfolding, the fine arts were not vital. Great portions of the American people were pre-occupied in the prime achievements which we have already described—in doing away with aristocratical distinctions, in establishing mass education and later with the issue of chattel slavery.

Furthermore, to the average American the arts were remote. Few persons had paintings or statuary or the opportunity of seeing them. Such occasional exhibitions as were held were confined to a few cities and were almost wholly of classical subjects. Now while Americans might sometimes, as they did, give classical names to towns, they had no use for the results of classical arts. And this is what they did understand—the relation of these to their political and other ideals. The statement made a little later in Congress by Representative Smith of Alabama correctly reflected one aspect of the national feeling. Why, he asked, had not European peoples, after a thousand years of trials, succeeded in establishing republican governments? He replied to his own question "because of their antiquities and their monuments, breathing, smacking and smelling of nobility and royalty, and because half the people are magnates." In his

pamphlet, "Esthetics at Washington," Horatio Greenough, the American sculptor, quoted this utterance with approval.

To the American people the arts had a repugnant foreign flavor and were anti-democratic. The saying was then common that hitherto "learning had been cloistered," meaning, of course, that it had been secluded from the mass of the people. The same feeling applied to art productions as being largely in the possession of the powerful and rich and forbidden to the popular gaze.

As long as the old ideas clung to the arts, the American people as a whole were not merely indifferent; they were positively hostile. To many Americans the independent stand taken by Morse and his colleagues and the new ideas they advocated came as a refreshing treat. The controversy between the contending parties—the Academy dignitaries, on the one hand, and on the other the earnest, aggressive artists of the National Academy of Design—was followed with keen zest. The war was one of speeches, pamphlets, published letters and rejoinders.

The objections of Morse and his brother artists against the Academy "patrons" were first published in the New York *Morning Courier* and then in pamphlet form. Here was a so-called Academy of Art, they pointed out, in which artists were subordinated to a paltry place and in which the power of money dominated. Under the Academy's rules, artists were not allowed to vote in their capacity as painters, sculptors and architects. To have a vote they had to become stockholders. There was no body of artists to direct affairs and supply paintings. There were no lectures on painting. The misnamed school for students was a fiasco. A few fossilized or purse-proud stockholders contrived to vest control in themselves and were opposed to having artists associated in the management. The annual exhibitions, notoriously of the same pictures, were laughing-stocks.

Morse's understanding of native conditions and the confidence

he felt in America hugely pleased the greater part of those reading his vigorous articles. The only dissenters were the incorrigible conservatives whom he attacked. He wrote in the *New York Journal of Commerce* in 1828 that in truth the country was very little advanced in taste for the fine arts. But was it not to be expected that the useful arts should be encouraged before the elegant? He declared his conviction, however, that the evolution would proceed. Having observed the uncommon progress made in the useful arts and the exuberance of talent displayed in them, he said that he was led to predict for America the most elevated station at some future period in the elegant arts also.

The elegant arts, Morse continued, had already landed on American shores. The American people would welcome them "when their beneficial influence in elevating the character of a nation is more fully appreciated; when the absurd notion shall be rejected that they are inimical to liberty, while the atmosphere of a free government is the only one in which they have ever freely breathed; when the truth is felt that our own country, from its very freedom, is the natural habitation of these arts. . . . No! the nation will not frown them back, nor compel them to seek a shelter in the less genial atmosphere of despotic courts." He decried the patronizing of foreign manufactories and the spending of large sums for alleged original paintings. Deceptions, he said, were common in Europe.

"As regards the general character of picture dealing," Morse wrote, "a residence of four years in London enables me to speak not from the opinions of others only but from personal observation. . . . I hazard nothing in saying that the history of picture dealing in London is for the most part a history of *trick* and *fraud*." Morse urged Americans to buy the works of their own artists. "The artist with us is generally dependent upon his profession for his support, and (unless he can sell his natural

style of work) he will be forced to subdue his independence to the whims of fashion however grating to his feelings, and fall in with the errors of contemporaries if they are popular, however repulsive to his sober judgment. As the artist cannot be pensioned in this country, I know of no better way than that I proposed, viz., to purchase his works." Morse's article was republished as a pamphlet.

The officers of the National Academy of Design requested the Common Council of the City of New York to allot quarters for exhibitions and for teaching art. The application was refused. Whether the influence of the Academy "patrons" was responsible we cannot say. Rooms were loaned over the Arcade Baths in Chambers Street, and there works of living artists never before exhibited were displayed. To insure novelty and open the way to all artists the rule was adopted that no painting once exhibited was to be included in any future exhibition. The same rooms were hired and an art school was started; in 1828 the National Academy of Design had thirty-five students.

Addressing the students on April 18, 1831, William Dunlap, a professor of historical painting, denounced patronage and the "patrons" of the New York Academy of Fine Arts. "Where men know most," he said, "the arts are most esteemed. In enlightened Greece they revered, they almost adored their artists—they did not talk of patronizing them. They looked to them for instruction and sublime pleasure and not as objects wanting protection. Patronage! degrading word! Only used by presumptuous ignorance—only submitted to by the basest sycophancy. Every artist who has the feelings of a man, or more especially of a republican man, will spurn from him the offer of patronage, as debasing to himself, to his art and to his country."

Quoting Samuel Johnson's definition of a patron as "commonly a wretch who protects with insolence and is paid with



flattery," Dunlap went on to observe that it was only in a country of barbarians that the artist could hanker for patronage. "If he truly loves his art, his pecuniary wants will be few, and the wise and the virtuous will be happy to administer to those wants in fair exchange of their products for his, as equals, giving benefit for benefit. 'Poor and content is rich, and rich enough.' If a rich man has taste and knowledge, and desires the work of some artist, he seeks for it and is as much obliged as obliging. It is only the ignorant who thinks in such a case that he is patron; and it is only the unworthy who considers himself as patronized.

"But let not the ignorant, because strong in the possession of wealth, presume to call themselves the protectors of the wise or skilful. Our beloved country is politically a democracy. When all our fellow citizens shall have a true notion of the character of a democrat, no man will feel pride from the mere possession of wealth or degradation from the absence of it. . . .

"The time has not long passed away since authors in Europe called for patronage and wrote fulsome dedications to titled blockheads; when those books which taught wisdom and independence were ushered in by a servile flattery. . . .

"It is vain to look for honor from others if we do not honor ourselves. It is for painters and other artists to teach mankind the true estimation in which the profession of the fine arts must be held. . . . Can there be anything so contemptible as a sycophant who debases the Heaven-imparted talent intrusted to him? Sycophancy is incompatible with true genius. . . . If you see a man bowing to the rich or influential, for patronage and good dinners, flattering power for recommendation and protection, becoming a thing of bows and smiles and honeyed words, be assured that he lacks mind as much as he lacks self-respect."

Concluding, Dunlap said that genius felt that it belonged to Nature's aristocracy, and it despised the aristocracy of mere



wealth. "The aristocracy of Nature is composed of the nobles who are stamped such by their Maker, and are in principle and practice true democrats—lovers of their fellowmen and supporters of the equal rights of all. I trust that such aristocrats will be formed in this Academy."

We have given this address almost in full because it flashes the spirit of the revolt. It made somewhat of a commotion. Upon the students it had a thrilling effect. It was published in the newspapers and as a pamphlet. A growing number of thinking Americans began to perceive the vista of an art in harmony with national ideas.

At first, the complacent "patrons" of the American Academy of the Fine Arts affected to ignore the new movement which to them seemed the vaporings of insecure artists who could do nothing for or by themselves. But when it was seen that the movement took root and grew and its principles made striking headway, the cluster of "patrons" tried the expedient of seeking to absorb it. They appointed a committee to confer with a committee of the National Academy of Design on the subject of a proposed fusion. The positive condition made by the National Academy of Design committee as a preliminary to any discussion of negotiations was the abolition of stockholders. To this, the American Academy of Arts committee would not agree. It did, however, as a token of conciliation, offer to elect six artists on the board of directors, but when the matter was put to a vote of the stockholders only two artists were elected. The attempted negotiations were a fizzle.

The real cause of the failure was the incurably smug, dogmatic insistence of the American Academy of Fine Arts directors that artists could not get along without patrons.

John Trumbull, still president of that institution, disclosed this in an address he made on January 28, 1833, to the directors on the report of the conference committee. His argument for

patronage was: "It has been proved by all experience, and indeed, it is a truism, that the arts cannot flourish without patronage in some form. It is manifest that artists cannot interchangeably purchase the works of each other and prosper. They are necessarily dependent upon the protection of the rich and great. In this country there is no sovereign who can establish and endow academies. . . . The governments, that is, the legislative assemblies of our nation, or of the separate States, cannot be looked up to by the arts with any hope of protection like this. The church offers us as little hope as the State. The fine arts, those arts which polish and adorn society, are in this country thrown for protection and support upon the bounty of individuals and the liberality of the public."

The recitation of such sentiments made the "patrons" of the Academy of Fine Arts all the more odious to the artists of the new movement. By publishing Trumbull's address as a pamphlet and distributing it, the American Academy "patrons" sought to gain public favor but were dismally unsuccessful. Their institution gradually faded into nothingness. On the other hand, the National Academy of Design flourished and remains to this day.

The revolt of many American artists against enslavement to European customs and traditions was further shown when in 1839 Thomas R. Hofland proposed that artists from all over the United States form a National Academy of Confederate Artists. He enlarged upon the radical difference between the American and the European view.

"Unlike," he wrote, "the hoary nations of the Old World, whose glories are of the past, this is emphatically the country of the present and the future. An American looks back, indeed, upon the short annals of his country with pride and exultation, but it is with a different feeling from that which animated the Roman,

as wandering by the crumbling ruins of the Capitol, he ruminates upon the ancient greatness of *his* country. . . . Not so the American. He loves to muse upon the past, because he draws from it bright prophecies of future glories; and in nothing may he more reasonably indulge this feeling than in the contemplation of the arts."

With this spirit invigorating American artists, what held back the development of the arts? Various causes. Foremost was the deadly influence of capitalism rushing into wealth and power in the North. The stand taken by the slaveholding oligarchy of the South in preaching through its college professors that the arts could not exist without a helot or drudge population to do the menial work, also had a distinctly antagonizing effect upon many Americans in the North and West. If, they said, art could bloom only upon the basis of enslaving one part of the inhabitants and systematically degrading workingmen everywhere, better not have it. Other causes were apparently more influential in retarding the progress of the arts but in reality they were subordinate.

At this point, we can do nothing better than to refer to an address on "The Prospects of Art in the United States" by the Rev. Dr. George W. Bethune at the opening of the Artists' Fund Society in Philadelphia, in May, 1840. The very fact that artists had to resort to shifts of one kind or another to get money for their necessities was an eloquent proof of the struggles they had to make against depressing obstacles.

Bethune approached the crux of the situation by gradual stages. He first told how the aristocratic forms of Europe called representatives of wealth and power round the sovereign in his capital, and how it was "both policy and pride which employs Art to give magnificence to abodes of authority, and to cover with grace the deformities of oppressive rule." Then he contrasted this with the condition in America where the people were widely scattered,

where there were few cities, and where the country districts, in national questions, ruled the cities. He spoke of the survivals of Puritan severity and Quaker stiffness, and the incessant demands made upon American enterprise by circumstances of a new country.

"There is very great reason," he said, "to believe in the future success of Art among us. Our people, when excited in any pursuit, allow no limits to their enthusiasm. . . . Hitherto, their attention has been compelled to engagements of more immediate usefulness . . . and by the agitation of many questions in finance and political morals."

All of these causes were truly contributory, and yet neither utilitarian development nor any other of the specified factors were responsible for the failure to buy the work of American artists. Bethune recognized the prevalent toadyism to European art as a main hindrance. He denounced it at length. The wealthy families of the North were now increasingly of a capitalist industrial nature as distinguished from the old landholding families. Rich men and women, adopting the old aristocratic depreciation of any artistic object of American origin, sought European productions. The American manufacturer insisted that the American people buy American goods only and fortified himself with a tariff. But in adorning his house he wanted nothing American. Bethune gave this description of rich Americans who had been to Europe:

"These men will pass through your exhibitions, *nasa adunco*, full of scraps from foreign languages, and abusing by misuse the terms of Art, give you to understand that in their opinion, nothing which you can produce is worth looking at by one who has seen the Buckingham Gallery, the Louvre, the Vatican or the Bourbon collections. They will often parade upon their walls miserable dark daubs, imposed upon them by scheming picture dealers, as



works of old masters, but they cannot think for a moment of buying an American picture. *Heed them not!*"

Let it not be supposed that the paralyzing standards of the rich, copied from those of Europe, affected painting only. The blight extended to music and architecture and sought to strangle the development of a true American literature.

Urging that a taste for music should be cultivated in America and that it should be directed by American feeling, the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, in October, 1834, told how only foreign music was the fashion. By "fashion" was meant, of course, the inclusion of the rich only; it was they for whose benefit performances were given. "At present," the article said, "we are Italians—we are Germans—we are English—we are anything but Americans. We listen almost whole nights to performances of which we know comparatively nothing, either of music or the words, yet we fail not at regular intervals to applaud with an enthusiasm which should indicate a perfect knowledge of both."

The mandate of what was accounted the "fashionable world" against anything but European music, musicians and singers was so strong and arbitrary that no American having gifts or aspirations in those fields could get the slightest encouragement. Not until many years later did American composers obtain recognition, and then only after having achieved the prime requisite of a reputation in Europe. American singers were long not even considered unless they had first Europeanized themselves. Often, to make themselves appear as foreign artists, they had to adopt the disguise of European names. The rich, as a matter of vogue, were eager enough to avow themselves customers of the fine arts in Europe. But what of America? "The fine arts and works of taste," said an article entitled "A Chapter of Society," published in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, in July, 1834, "are very much neglected, and genius receives too little encouragement,



if it chance not to be employed in some money-making or labor-saving invention."

In stimulating the artists' revolt the example of a few venturesome leading authors doubtless had its influence. They had already broken away from the yoke of patronage. Furthermore, they had disputed, then defied the aristocratic dictum that the acceptance of remuneration was debasing. In particular, American literature had begun, although only faintly, to emerge from enslavement to European requirements and conventions. Some American poets early commenced to express the national albeit not the democratic spirit.

But fiction! The files of such magazines as the *New York Weekly Museum or Polite Repository of Amusement and Instruction*, published from 1815 to 1819, or the *New York Literary Gazette*, published in 1825-1826, give an edifying idea of the kind of fiction usually put forth for American consumption. These and other magazines catered to the aristocratic and would-be-aristocratic classes. The invariable contents of such magazines were novelettes reprinted from British publications, stories centering upon the insipidities of stupid lords and languorous ladies. Drones were turned into heroes, and vapid damsels into heroines.

In America, where in general performance, not pedigree, was valued, and where achievement, not ancestry, was extolled, such mawkish stuff was ludicrously unsuitable. Did the magazine owners publish it because no copyright inhibitions existed to prevent appropriation? Not wholly so. The fact that American writers imitated these stilted productions proved that vogue exercised sway. But there was an additional and deeper explanation. An anonymous American critic remarked that this literary dependence upon Great Britain was a survival of colonial dependence. It was humiliating to the great American nation, he wrote, that it should depend upon the say-so of critics three thousand

miles away for its literary opinions, and that its writers should still look beyond the seas for literary fame. "But everyone knows," he added, "that an American writer must delve on uncheered and unblessed until he has contrived to get an echo of his name beyond the Atlantic. What efforts, what arts, what servility to obtain it!"

From this puerility James Fenimore Cooper had shown the courage to detach himself. The literary supineness of his day was such that, in the preface to the 1821 edition introducing his novel "The Spy," he felt constrained to give a long explanation of his boldness in choosing an American subject. His main reasons were: The ground was untrodden and would have the charms of novelty; only one writer had preceded him in dealing with native subjects; the patriotic ardor of the American people would appreciate and reward attempts to portray anything national; an author could write better of familiar characters and scenes.

The backwardness of American literature was only partly due to the foibles of the fashionable and the newly-rich. The one class read foreign novels, and such of the other as indulged in reading believed, perforce, it had to follow. Practically all the so-styled literature was designed for the wealthy and well-to-do. Much of the fault then and later lay, however, in the writers themselves. Educated upon the lines of British models of literature they, in general, held them in the greatest reverence. They did not seek inspiration in the abounding vitality of the American people nor subjects in the remarkable accomplishments already made by America. These things were passed by entirely unnoticed. The people as a whole had an unshakeable confidence in the ideals of their country, but what were termed the "upper classes" were only too inclined to side with foreign critics savagely assailing American ways and thought.

Little attention was given to Washington Irving until, in 1832, he returned home with the *éclat* of a European tour. More than three hundred merchants, gentlemen, judges, lawyers, editors and others then welcomed him at a public dinner. And what was one of the chief tributes paid him as a literary personage? Chancellor Kent, who presided, said that American manners and tastes were greatly in need of improvement, and that Irving's satirical productions had undertaken "to chastise folly, correct false taste, reform bad manners and mend the heart."

Representative Americans protested against this inexcusable subservience to foreign ideas. Had not America stamped its originality upon religious, political, moral, educational and mechanical achievements? Why not upon the arts? Had not other engrafted ideas been thrown out? Why retain an engrafted painting, music or literature? And, moreover, Americans were an earnest people; what reason was there for encouraging a flimsy literature that might turn them into a nation of light readers and superficial thinkers?

Remonstrating that America was inundated with foreign novels or imitations full of trash Benjamin Franklin Butler, in an anniversary discourse at the Albany Institute, on April 23, 1830, said that in many cases their "tone and execution are repugnant alike to morality and good taste." In an address to the students of Union College, July 26, 1836, Gulian Verplanck, one of the regents of the University of the State of New York, appealed to them "to be true to yourselves and your country." Observe, he said, the condition of talent in Europe. There much of it still wore the galling though gilded chain of patronage. Note, he pointed out, the strong reverence men of gifts there gave to titled inferiority and viciousness. "Far nobler, far happier than kings can make him," he said, "is the lot of him who

dedicates his life and his intellect to instruct and delight the people."

The Boston *Quarterly Review*, in January, 1838, declared that it had no faith in the benefits of a literary caste. The age of democratic literature had come, and authors must write in the spirit of truth. The strata of Old World thought, with the old manners which clothed them and grew out of them, had been broken down in America. Why seek to perpetuate exploded ideas?

"Till quite recently, the literary men of our country have not sympathized with the people," said O. A. Brownson, in an oration at Brown University, Providence, R. I., on September 3, 1839. "The creators of American literature must be democrats. . . . No man who studies attentively the American people, can doubt that their souls, however defective their utterance or crude their notions, are wedded to democracy." No longer was there any struggle in America founded upon rank; that question had been settled. "The question which is coming up here is not between the high-born and the low-born. . . . It is, briefly, a struggle between Man and Money."

The wrath of a reviewer of Griswold's book on "Poets and Poetry of America" was expressed in this outspoken fashion in the *North American Review* of January, 1844: "We begin to sicken of the custom, now so common, of presenting even our best poems to the attention of foreigners, with a deprecating, apologetic air, as if their acceptance of the offering, with a few soft and sickly compliments, would be an act of kindness demanding our warmest acknowledgments. The folly we yearly practice of flying into a passion with some inferior English writer who caricatures our faults and tells dull jokes about his tour through our land, has only the effect to exalt an insignificant scribbler into notoriety and give nominal value to his recorded impertinence. If the mind and heart of the country had its due expression, if its

life had taken form in a literature worthy of itself, we should pay little regard to the childish tattling of a pert coxcomb who was discontented with our taverns, or the execrations of some bluff sea captain who was shocked with our manners. These are only superficialities of our life."



## CHAPTER XIII

### MOVEMENT FOR AN AMERICAN ART

IN releasing themselves from the fetters of patronage, American artists had attained personal independence. But they had a long, uphill struggle before they could establish an American art.

The speculative writer having a vague knowledge might aver that their hardest task was in educating the American people. It was not. Their own consecutive protests show that their chief obstacle at this period was the vulgarian rich. At a time when the old American prejudices against art had about disappeared in many places and when American painters and the people in general were ready for an art symbolizing American history and conditions, the rich made a fetich of European productions. This stand, in turn, had its influence upon other groups including architects. These, following a groove, adhered closely to European models, and even in public buildings often ordered the interior decorating done on conventional European lines.

The trend of American painters was far in advance of the position of architects. However balked, the painters, as a group, did aspire to a native representative art. They did prefer American subjects. Most architects were servile imitators of hoary European styles totally out of place in America and all perfunctorily designed without any regard to location or purpose. The architect had sunk into a mere spineless draughtsman. A craze prevailed for Grecian columns, a craze partly due to the architects' own blind admiration for the classic past. Designs were mechanically supplied without protest. Irrespective of the nature of the building, whether public structure, bank, palatial resi-

dence, theater, hotel or church, it had to have the Grecian colonnade. In Eastern cities there are still remains of this incongruous fashion.

But, although American painters felt the impulse of portraying their own country, their vision stopped there. They do not seem to have had the least realization of an art available to the people. Denouncing the rich, and justly so, as faddists and ignoramuses, American artists in the same breath called upon them to buy American instead of European paintings. Had this been done these American painters would have made no objection to their own productions being immured in mansions. All around the artist were luminous evidences of the fact that in their ascent the people would allow no bounds to be set to their cultural opportunities. Self-evidently, the public school, college and library were not finalities but intermediate stages or rather links in the scheme unfolding. They unerringly indicated the time when an art sequestered from the mass and invisible to the mass would no longer be tolerated.

This foreshadowed development was not sensed by American artists. Nor, for their lack of acumen can they, with any degree of justice, be criticized. They had enough to occupy their attention in contending for an American art. Incessantly they were put to the need of protesting against indiscriminate subservience to European modes.

Considering the distinct trend toward American subject matter, it was all the more strange that in planning the scope of the Smithsonian Institution, its Board of Regents thought predominantly of an antiquated European, not a fresh American, art. James Smithson, a British chemist and mineralogist, had bequeathed £105,000 to the United States Government in trust "to found at Washington an establishment, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." His contemplated plan was mainly for

the encouragement of science and natural history, but it also comprehended attention to the "elegant arts."

In their plan of organization, submitted to Congress, January 6, 1848 (Senate Document No. 23, Miscellaneous, 1848), the Board of Regents outlined an elaborate program for that portion of the undertaking dealing with science and natural history, but could think of three kinds of features only in connection with an art department. These features were: "Attempts should be made to procure for the gallery casts of the most celebrated articles of ancient and modern sculpture; the arts may be encouraged by providing a room, free of expense, for the exhibition of the objects of the Art Union and similar other societies; a small appropriation should be made for models of antiquities, such as those of the remains of ancient temples, etc." The successive secretaries of the Institution were men of one or another branch of science, and the Institution was organized an almost exclusively scientific one, the arts features remaining negligible. It was only in our own time—in 1906—that the separate title of National Gallery of Art was applied to such works of art as it had more recently accumulated.

There was one rich man of that period who did have the vision of the practicability of an art school for indigent American students. He was Peter Cooper. Deeply interested in the education of the industrial classes he was far in advance of his times in his belief that poor boys yearning for an art education should have it. He gave them the facilities in his establishment and endowment of Cooper Union designed for the instruction of Americans in practical science and art. It was an application to other fields of the philanthropic idea effected two decades earlier by Stephen Girard in providing a college in Philadelphia for orphans, and the forerunner of the idea later taken up by Andrew Carnegie and other multimillionaires in donating vast sums for library sites, auditoriums, institutes and other estab-

ishments. In the era when Peter Cooper made his gifts, the rich as a class were not influenced by general social considerations. They were actuated by motives of insatiable self-aggrandizement.

Rich American "tuft hunters" who went to Europe and bought art works there were satirized by W. L. Tiffany in an article on "Art and Its Future Prospects in the United States," published in *Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book*, in March, 1853. "Europe," he wrote in part, "is three thousand miles away from us, marked by nature with different physical characteristics and social conditions the opposite of our own. It would hardly seem needful or natural that we should slavishly import for our own use her rotten conventionalism of art and philosophy. . . . We will reverently accept the good of her teaching, but the stench of her decay shall finally disgust us, and she shall be our standard of excellence no more. The future spirit of our art must inherently be vast, like our western plains, majestic like our forests, and generous like our rivers. It will find utterance through ardent republican associations and desire, and thus the idealized commemoration of the national history will be one of its most diligent endeavors."

This was the very point incisively made in a memorial signed by one hundred and twenty-six American artists and sent to Congress in 1859. The memorial asked Congress to appoint an Art Commission to supervise the adornment of the new extension to the Capitol. The signers expressed their deep regret that legislators should have given so little attention to a native art. They deplored the fact that, although rich opportunities existed for the illustration in pencil and chisel of America's history, yet with few exceptions the work had been denied to American artists whose province it really was. It would be the pride of American painters and sculptors, they urged, to embody in enduring and beautiful forms, for the benefit of their own and future generations, all that was glorious and ennobling in American history,



character and life as a people. The time was now at hand, the memorial went on, when America could assume a position in the world of art as enviable and exalted as that it had attained socially and politically. There was a golden occasion to give an impulse to the cause of American art. Its beneficent influence would extend to remote posterity.

In reporting upon this memorial the House Select Committee, in House Report No. 198, Thirty-fifth Congress, Second Session, expressed its surprise that foreigners had been given the contract for the work, but did not explain how this had come about. In sympathy with the memorial, this committee began its report by saying that art was a language, conveying to future ages the traits and characteristics, customs and arts of national life. The report went on:

"The American people have a history whose passage deserves to be engraved upon imperishable materials. It embodies a new idea. It imports an advanced step in the elevation of man to the true dignity of his nature. It has been developed through circumstances of difficulty and danger which have afforded opportunities for the display of the most conspicuous examples of valor, prudence, fortitude, genius, wisdom and patriotism, each of which Art should commemorate in such connection as to render it part of the nation's fame.

"The Committee have not been informed that American artists have been engaged upon the embellishment of the Capitol, but they have been made painfully conscious that the work has been prosecuted by foreign workingmen under the immediate supervision of a foreigner. As a consequence, the Committee find nothing in the design and execution of the ornamental work of the Capitol thus far which represents our own country, or the genius and taste of her artists. . . . An eagle and the national flag may be discovered occasionally amidst the confusion of scrollwork and mythological figures presented to the eye; but



the presence of conventional gods and goddesses, with meaningless scrolls and arabesques, albeit they may be wrapped in 'red, white and blue' will never suggest to the American, as he wanders among the halls and committee rooms, any idea to touch his heart or inspire his patriotism. He beholds nothing to remind him of the grandeur of his country, its origin or history."

Congress established a United States Art Commission, authorizing it to survey public buildings in Washington and mature a general plan of action. Reporting on February 22, 1860, this Commission gave its findings in extenso in Executive Document No. 43:

Except the work of Crawford and Rogers, it found little in the decorative work pertaining to American history. "Art, like nations," the report said, "has its heroic history, its refined and manly history, its effeminate and sensuous history. Our art is just entering upon the first of these planes. Shall we allow it to be supplanted here in its young life by that of an effete and decayed race which in no way represents us? Our pride should revolt at the very idea. . . . Are our portrait statues, in which the Greek or Roman costume has been substituted for that worn by the individuals represented, satisfactory? Do they not rather convey a feeling of shame for the paucity of invention on the part of the artist, and an acknowledgment that we have sought refuge in stuffs and draperies to conceal our want of power in the expression of character?

"We are shown in the Capitol a room in the style of the 'Loggia of Raphael'; another in that of Pompeii; a third after the manner of the Baths of Titus; and even in the rooms where American subjects have been attempted, they are so foreign in treatment, so overlaid and subordinated by symbols and impertinent ornaments, that we hardly recognize them. Our chief delight in this survey is in a few nicely-painted animals and American birds and plants in some of the lower halls; and even here one

familiar with foreign art sees constantly intermingled the misapplied symbols of a past mythology but wanting in the exquisite execution and significance of the originals."

At this juncture and for years later the avidity of the rich to possess "art collections" was a raging mania. Cultured contemporaries looked upon it with wonderment. They saw the accumulators of large fortunes turn to the amassing of paintings and statuary and glory in a new and quickly acquired rôle.

The titles of "railroad king" and "manufacturing magnate" were by no means distasteful to the pride of the galaxy of millionaires and yet they realized that something was lacking in their composition. Money controlled service, bestowed power, and often exacted a show of deference but commanded no real public esteem. There were those who professed admiration for the "smartness" of the uppermost rich in being able to gather such masses of wealth. But the acclaim of these groups was not that of the American people. The memory of any man who did a great deed or personified some laudable accomplishment has always been treasured by Americans; the country is full of statues to its political, military and naval heroes, and literary, scientific and other notabilities. Yet, who ever saw the American people rear a statue to a man whose life passion was the heaping of money wealth? There are some of these memorials imposed here and there upon cities, but they were foisted by families, heirs or cliques; nobody gives them any notice or, as time passes, well knows who the originals of these effigies were.

Around crass wealth there was nothing but a tinsel glamour. At heart the possessors knew it. Some kind of distinction conferring personal luster was sought and seemed to be found in "art collections." These millionaire and multimillionaire characters were men with but the crudest education. Some of the older were almost illiterate. With scarcely an exception all were masterfully brutal in methods of acquisition, and ruthless in

the exercise of financial and economic power. They and their families did not like either the implication or taunt that they were vulgar, mercenary upstarts. The "art collection" device recommended itself as an effective means of affixing to themselves a reputation for elegance of taste. To assemble an "art collection" by quick processes was deliciously simple. In general the art dealers advised the course and prompted the selections; all that the rich had to do was to sign the checks.

In the majority of cases one easy, comprehensive rule governed purchases. The larger the canvas, the more ornately framed it was, and the higher the price, the more certainly important and valuable the painting was reckoned. Coincidentally, the newspapers were almost always notified of the impressive prices paid as well as informed what the total sums were at which these "collections" were appraised. Inspired descriptions seldom said anything of the art significance of such "collections" which in characteristic phrase were not infrequently referred to as "hoards."

The first importations were those of French, Dutch and Belgian paintings and those of third-rate British artists. Later came heavy importations of German canvases. He who cares to burrow into the details of these collections may with edification consult the account written by S. P. Avery, an "art expert," and published in Lossing's "History of New York City." It gave the facts up to the year 1884, specifying a list of ninety-one rich "collectors" in that city alone. Few of these had American paintings. Avery's chapter is so replete with figures that one thinks he is scanning a catalogue of merchandise prices. But what Avery did not tell was the promiscuously lavish way in which these collections were displayed. A scant few pictures were rated as niggardly; to give convincing proofs of prodigal opulence as large an array as possible had to be shown. Families upon the apex of wealth had their private galleries in which paintings

were usually massed in rampant profusion. Those on a less elevated but still high scale of wealth used their spacious parlors, sometimes other rooms, too, often cluttering every available bit of space from floor to ceiling with tiers of paintings. Avery eulogized William H. Vanderbilt's "as the most valuable collection," and thus rhapsodized: "His superb galleries contain about two hundred pictures. Their value must considerably reach over \$1,000,000."

The fashion of the rich in eastern American cities for imported paintings spread to the rich of interior places. It carried with it three evils. One was the disparagement of American painters and their work. The second was the notion that American painters could not have any standing unless backed by a European training and sustained by European recognition. The third evil was that many Americans of artistic temperament but weak personalities felt themselves driven into producing the kind of pictures and statuary that the execrable taste (or lack of taste) of the rich demanded.

How joyously did real American art critics welcome such original work as John Quincy Adams Ward's! His "Indian Hunting Boy" was the feature of the National Academy of Design's exhibition in 1862. And we may here interject the fact that while the rich were cramming their habitations with a hodgepodge of paintings and statuary, real American lovers of art had managed to get the funds for the erection of a new National Academy of Design building. When the cornerstone was laid, on October 21, 1863, the *New York Times* said that "owing to the universal interest excited in our literary and artistic circles, it called together a large concourse of the most refined classes of our people."

Indeed, never was literature more at its best. In poetry, fiction, philosophy and polemic it had been valiantly influential in championing the cause of the Negro slave and in proclaiming democ-



racy. The mass of Americans were enchanted with such declarations as those of Horace Greeley when he called upon the writers to make common cause with the aspirations of the farmer, mechanic and worker and to toil by the hands, if necessary, in order to be in a position of literary independence. The men of literature also came in direct contact with the people, while the clan of painters and sculptors still retained a background of exclusiveness.

In his "Life of Horace Greeley," James Parton related how important an American institution lecturing had become. "What a delight to *see* the men whose writings have charmed and moved and formed us . . ." Parton wrote. "In large cities, the lecturer has to contend with rival attractions, theater, concert and opera. . . . To know the importance of the popular lecturer, one must reside in a country town. . . . The arrival of the great man is expected with eagerness. A committee of the village magnates meet him at the cars and escort him to his lodging. There is talk of the distinguished visitor at all the tea tables, in the shops and across the palings of fences. There is a buzz and an agitation throughout the town."

When Ward's statue "The Fugitive Slave" was exhibited at the National Academy of Design exhibition in 1863, American critics acclaimed it as a symptom of a wholesome change. Here was something genuinely original studied from nature.

"With the exception of a few monumental works," said the *New York Times*, on May 3, 1863, "the American sculptors of our day have been gravitating toward decorative art. A large majority of works of this kind are the faces or figures of pretty girls and children, out of which all traces of soul have been elaborated away in a mere aim at prettiness and mechanical finish. These emasculations, in a spirit of weak sentimentality, are called incessantly 'Hope' or 'Faith' or 'Innocence,' to suit the pleasure of the purchaser, and may be changed at his sweet will, so that



one statue can be made to do service for a whole gallery of the sentiments. So much multiplied has this class of work become, and so ostentatiously has it been thrust before the public, that they have almost come to think that nothing better is worthy of their notice. It is not a little refreshing, therefore, to find a man who can grapple successfully with the higher requisites of his noble art. . . . Yet this work is here thrust into obscurity in a dimly-lighted alcove by a committee of artists who hang in the best places scores of pictures that scarce deserve to be called works of art."

This favoritism of committees and juries was, indeed, a pernicious feature in American art. Essentially it was a relic of European conditions, but in our own time brought its own remedy in the rebellion of independent artists with their open-for-all artists' exhibitions.

Fully realizing that they had a most voracious, gullible market among the American rich, European fabricators of paintings carried on a brisk industry. Some details were given in an article published in the New York *Boulevard* and copied in the New York *Times*, in May, 1866. "The supply of this demand," it said, "has now become an immense trade in Europe. In Belgium alone there are more than three thousand 'artists' who live by making copies for the American and the English markets (for the English are afflicted with the same mania), and who turn out every year thousands of wretched caricatures of celebrated paintings which find their way into this country. . . . Hired by the week, month or year, by the large dealers, they grind out their pictures as mechanically as a Japanese turns the crank of his praying-mill. But this is not all. As so large a number of 'artists' could not by any means gain access to the great picture galleries for the purpose of copying, each master [employer] has copies, good or bad, of the most popular pictures in the public and private galleries of Europe, and on these his employees make their travesties,

at the same time taking the liberty of introducing as many variations as they like into their copies, to relieve the monotony of the task.

"These worthless—worse than worthless because corrupting—caricatures are sent over to the United States by the thousands every year and are bought up with eagerness as genuine specimens of European art. Large quantities come from Florence, Rome and Paris, but the majority are from Belgium where labor and living are both very cheap."

Most of these productions, the article said, were sent into interior American cities and auctioned off as originals to the rich. Many, it may be added, were also used to embellish garish saloons.

It was this prolific dumping of spurious "art work" which influenced Congress most in putting a tariff duty upon the productions of foreign artists. For doing so Congress was much ridiculed as provincial by European correspondents and periodicals. But obviously it had sufficient reasons. However, American artists in Europe did not at all like the idea of art being put on the same footing of protection as manufactured goods. Thirty-four American artists living in Rome sent a tart protest to Congress a few years later against the tariff duty of thirty per cent. Art, they set forth, stood upon a different ground than factory wares; each artist was an individual whose work could be done by himself only.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE ARTS SWERVE TO DEMOCRACY

THERE NOW came a great change signifying the transition from the sheer aristocracy of art to its alliance with democracy. This movement setting in proved to be widespread and enduring. Educators had been declaring that the people would take no real interest in art until they had the right to come personally in contact with its productions. The interring of paintings in the mansions of the rich was viewed as a class pretension, an anomalous imitation of the ways of kings and nobles. Whether the quality of the paintings was good, bad or indifferent, the monopolization by a few antagonized the people. It was opposed to every principle of democracy gravitating toward culture.

The idea of public art museums took firm popular hold. In Buffalo the Fine Arts Academy with its art gallery had been opened in 1862, becoming in time the Albright Art Gallery by reason of J. J. Albright contributing the fund, about \$400,000, for the erection of a new building. When, in 1864, the California Art Union was organized, considerable popular interest was shown in the later exhibition of one hundred and thirty paintings mostly by resident artists. Providing of good music for the people also became a fixed principle of societies and municipalities; in New York City in 1869 Theodore Thomas gave band concerts in Central Park, and in other American cities parks and halls were used for popular concerts which were highly appreciated.

With few exceptions the rich at first could not see the force of this movement, and when some of them did they viewed their support of it more as a benefaction they were bestowing than as

an acknowledgment of the advent of a new popular institution. One of the first to align himself with the movement was William Wilson Corcoran who, in 1869, founded and endowed the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C., as both a museum and an art school.

In the same year movements for public museums of the fine arts were begun in New York and Boston. The motive originating these was wholly public-spirited. These museums were not designed to commemorate the name of any donor, but were to be public institutions to be maintained, in part at least, at public expense.

The founders of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City were a group of men of different associations all sharing the idea that a popular knowledge of art was imperative to a nation's culture. There was J. Q. A. Ward, the sculptor; William Cullen Bryant, poet; Richard M. Hunt, architect; Andrew H. Green, civic enthusiast; Joseph H. Choate, lawyer; George William Curtis, publicist; Theodore Roosevelt, General John A. Dix, Edwin A. Morgan, John Taylor Johnston and others. Rich men were represented by Alexander T. Stewart and Marshall O. Roberts. Quasi-public control of the museum was assured by including among the trustees the Governor of the State of New York, and the Mayor and other specified public officials of New York City. Coöperation with art academies was guaranteed by the inclusion of the presidents of the National Academy of Design and of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The legislature, on April 13, 1870, passed an act incorporating the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

"No progress in art," said the report of the Executive Committee at that time, "is possible which is not based upon what has gone before. This knowledge must not only be possessed by artists, *but by the public also* as a condition of the growth of art with us."

The report criticized the great collections hitherto founded as not having been based upon this principle. It pointed to the great museums in Europe established by royal edict and aggrandized by unlimited expenditure decreed by potentates and supplemented by individual gifts. It told of the enormous crowd of visitors that European museums attracted. To convince New Yorkers indifferent to art the report made this appeal: "As is natural, in America we think more of establishing railroads and other channels of commerce. But were one of our towns to own a great Museum, visitors would flock thither from all parts of the Union in such numbers as would soon repay its outlay, and leave it, as it were, a free gift to posterity, with a prolific income for the benefit of the citizens at large. The pecuniary gift would be none the less because flowing in chiefly from indirect sources. A National Museum will 'pay,' to use an expressive Americanism."

This appeal to cupidity was a precautionary concept borrowed from the commercial class. Appraising everything it did from the standpoint of whether it would or would not be financially profitable, this class thought that everybody else was influenced by the same consideration. The great movements of the American people as a whole should have given the real clue to the national character, but somehow the dominant business men did not perceive it. In education alone the American people were spending large sums with no other thought than that of developing culture. It is likely, however, that some members of the committee feared that inasmuch as a public art museum was an innovation it might be regarded by some taxpayers as a wanton expenditure. Hence, to disarm in advance any possible opposition and to gain unanimous approval, they took pains to prove the contrary.

The address of the officers of the Metropolitan Museum of Art to the people of New York City in 1871 was in a different tone. It said that all persons of intelligence felt that the means



of the highest culture had been lacking to the citizens to an extent not creditable to American civilization. "Permanent collections of art are hardly known in America; chosen and carefully arranged collections are unknown; while even third-rate cities on the continent of Europe have valuable museums which students journey from far to inspect. . . . So far, our young American people of this generation are growing up as those of the last generation did, with few good models set before their students of design, and the means of completing their education not offered freely and fully to their students of humanity." A site in Central Park for the Museum of Art was given by the city, but prior to the completion of the building in 1880, rented quarters first on First Avenue, then on Fourteenth Street, were used.

> Since that time New York City's appropriations for building extensions and maintenance of the Metropolitan Museum of Art have been enormous. The present impressive structure is many times the size of the original building which in its time was thought notably large. A striking demonstration of the influence of public sentiment was the way in which the rich in New York City (as well as in other cities) felt under obligations to bequeath their collections to public museums. True, some of these collections sorely needed pruning, but the spirit prompting the gifts was either partly or wholly a recognition of the principle that the people were entitled to see them.

What a change from former times when aristocracy derided the capacity of anyone but those of their own anointed rank to appreciate art! Now we see the more advanced of the rich themselves proclaiming that the enjoyment of art is inherently a popular right. In the March, 1917, *Bulletin* of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert W. DeForest, president, gave the Museum's credo. He quoted from an article by Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer: "We believe that art, that beauty, is not a mere

ornament of existence, but a prime necessity of the eye of the soul, and that it need not be the personal possession of a few of the rich and leisured only but may be and should be a general possession, an integral part of the life of the community."

The inception of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts came about from the desire of several institutions to have the people see their collections. In about the year 1865 the Boston Water Power Company gave to the city a considerable area of land in the then Back Bay Fens to be held as a trust for some ultimate public use. Harvard College had a collection of engravings; the Institute of Technology one of architectural casts; and the Atheneum a number of paintings, sculptures and other objects. The representatives of these institutions proposed the formation of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. It was organized and on February 4, 1870, incorporated. The City of Boston offered the Back Bay plot at Copley Square, exempt from taxation, upon condition that the Museum should be free to all at least four days a month.

The project aroused much popular enthusiasm. Speaking on "Art Education in America" at the Lowell Institute, Boston, on February 22, 1870, Charles C. Perkins recounted the great things America had already done, and urged that it do for art by the establishment of museums what it had done for literature and science by its public schools and libraries. It was especially necessary, he said, to drink from every pure well of culture as an offset to the material aims of life. He related what France had done for art education. "Who can say," he went on, "that if the New World will but prepare for that moment by availing herself of those means for art culture which she has till now neglected, her sons may not at some future day work out for themselves new paths in a realm as boundless as their own wide land? Let us at least by creating educational museums of art give to them means of forming a standard of taste through

knowledge of the masterpieces of the past." Perkins' address was published in pamphlet form and widely distributed. At about the same time—in April, 1870—George F. Comfort wrote a powerful exhortation for the establishment of art museums in all American cities.

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts was at first located in the Atheneum Galleries. The call for a popular subscription for the funds with which to erect the first section of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts Building on Copley Square brought a remarkable demonstration of popular interest. The manifold sources from which the funds came upset the old idea that only the higher strata of society could be depended upon for art encouragement.

With surprise and gratification the custodians of the fund noted how the poorest of the poor vied with the rich in making contributions. Sometimes the laborer in overalls or the anemic clerk would trudge from his place of work to hand in his coins personally with an eager solicitude to know how the fund was progressing. In brief, the individual gifts of more than a thousand contributors ran from thirty-five cents to \$25,000, the whole reaching \$250,000. By the same means another \$125,000 for an addition to the building was obtained two years later. Still another \$250,000 was similarly raised nine years later for a second building addition. This made a total of \$625,000 gathered by popular subscription. Boston was proud of the result, and most deservedly so; the widespread genuine interest thus practically shown was the most precious of all assets. Massachusetts was, indeed, the first State to teach drawing as a regular study in all of its schools. Until 1871 it was taught in but few public schools there and in those few without method or purpose, but by 1877 it had become a functional part of its school system.

The engravings and casts originally loaned as the basis of the

exhibition of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts were eventually withdrawn. They were more than replaced by a growing, appealing art collection. In the ensuing years scores of donations were made, some of art objects, others of large sums of money or valuable real estate. Two of the funds thus received exceeded \$300,000; another fund, given in 1898, was of \$800,000. Public classes in drawing and painting were established in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. When, in 1899, it was decided to abandon the old building as objectionable for various reasons, the plot on which it stood was sold for a sum providing for more than half of the nearly \$3,000,000 expended for the new location and building on Huntington Avenue. Of that sum at least \$600,000 was given by private individuals, and \$500,000 came from appropriations out of the endowment funds. Gradually from the start, the days free to the public were extended until since 1918 this Museum has been open to the public on all days except chief holidays. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts seems to have been the first museum to commission members of the art staff to offer visitors oral comment upon the collections. Lectures have for years been an integral part of many museums. And, as in the Chicago Museum of Art and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, in museums in Philadelphia, Detroit, Worcester and other cities, popular concerts have been given in recent years in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

On December 7, 1872, the cornerstone of the new building of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia was laid. The speakers called upon the world to note that here was a monotonous manufacturing city the interests of which were supposedly far from the spheres of art. Yet it was the pure liberality of these very citizens which had developed such an art institution. This, Theodore Cuyler said in his speech, was the true reason for gratification. "No government aid or fostering care of the State has been, or perhaps could be, extended in our



own country to such an institution," he said. "Elsewhere, in other lands, imperial power and princely wealth have founded and endowed these grand galleries of the fine arts, which are the chiefest attraction of European capitals; but with us the State, while it assumes the duty of educating the people in such branches of learning as to fit them properly to comprehend the duties and responsibilities of good and intelligent citizens, has not yet, and perhaps cannot undertake, that higher and more refined and generous culture which is the true office of such academies as this."

To expand a taste in the community for art the San Francisco Art Association was founded in 1872. It later became the San Francisco Institute of Art, and when the earthquake of 1906 destroyed it, a new institute was erected by means of the beneficence of Edward F. Searles.

But the great general impetus to the organization of art museums came after the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, in 1876. At a cost of \$1,500,000 of which the State of Pennsylvania paid two-thirds and the City of Philadelphia one-third, Memorial Hall was built to contain a permanent art museum. Swarms of people from all over the United States who never before had the opportunity of seeing a collection of art works visited it and were impressed with the value of art museums.

The United States Government by its publications emphasized the need of a democracy of art, as for example, Dr. Isaac Edward Clarke's monograph published by the U. S. Bureau of Education in 1885. It called upon the American people to remember that for many centuries there had been nothing but an "aristocracy of art," with paintings and statuary almost exclusively in the possession of royal, noble, priestly or rich personages, and that it was the duty of the American people to demonstrate the essential democracy of art by themselves encouraging it in every possible way. Dr. Clarke's definition of a prosperous



art was simple: it was to be measured by its nearness to the hearts of a people.

In city after city art museums were established. The St. Louis City Art Museum was organized in 1879, and in 1909 reorganized under the name of the St. Louis Museum of Fine Arts as a city institution maintained from the proceeds of a special tax. In 1881 came the Cincinnati Museum Association to which the City of Cincinnati gave a reservation of nineteen acres in Eden Park upon which to erect buildings. Originating in a school of art practice in 1886, the Chicago Academy of Design by successive stages became the Art Institute of Chicago; the cost of its building, opened in 1893, was defrayed by \$1,000,000 voluntarily subscribed and \$200,000 from the World's Columbian Exposition; since then, an additional lecture room, hall and library (the gifts of rich men) have been built. The museum in Chicago was the first to introduce popular concerts. In 1888 the Detroit Museum of Art was built with a fund partly raised by public subscription and in part by city appropriation.

To particularize further in detail as to the history of art museums would entail expanding of this chapter to an interminable length. Besides, it is unnecessary, for the aim here is simply to sketch the groundwork of idealism leading to the establishment of the American public art museum. The purpose will therefore be suited by saying that in Springfield and Worcester, Mass., Brooklyn, N. Y., Indianapolis, Toledo, Milwaukee, Newark, N. J., Baltimore, Portland, Ore., Seattle and in other cities came rapidly the formation of attractive museums.

Some were founded and maintained by private endowments; others by a combination of donations, general subscription and city or State appropriations. The Drexel Institute Museum, in Philadelphia, came in 1891; the Department of Fine Arts of the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh in 1896. Nor should we overlook the Charleston (S. C.) Museum, an outgrowth, it is said, of

an old museum dating back to the year 1773, which institution, however, was in no way an art museum in the modern sense. Charleston also has the Gibbes Memorial Art Building, the gift of James S. Gibbes.

According to the latest figures procurable there are in the United States approximately ninety museums of art. Some are attached to public libraries but the greater part are distinct institutions. The number is constantly being augmented, and it is noteworthy that small American cities are increasing in the list. Many millions of Americans annually visit existing art museums. More than a million persons in 1923 visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

The most original feature of the methods of leading art museums in America may be described as the recognition of the duty of teaching the public comprehension of art by personal guidance. In Europe this was altogether unknown. Professor Reau of France wrote that it was "their constant attention to popular education that forms the chief originality of American art museums." When in 1910 the suggestion was made and, in 1911, acted upon in London that an official "guide demonstrator" be introduced at the British Museum, it was pointed out by the proposer that for two years such a system had been in operation at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and for a longer time at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

The stage has been reached where the lack of an art museum in any State has become a matter of general concern. The American Academy of Arts and Letters was expressly organized to assist in the establishment of art museums in such States as have none.

Decidedly we are not concerned so much with giving a list of art museums as we are with showing the spirit animating them. On March 14, 1916, there was a discussion at the Republican Club, New York City, on this question: "What can be done

to bring art closer to the people and increase their love for it?" Said Edward Robinson, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art: "I think we must all admit that the people of America are a nation of idealists. They show this in every great public movement. We perhaps are less conscious of it here in a great city, where the strife and stress of life are always so great, but take the American people by and large and I do not know where you will find a nation standing so closely by its ideals and deciding every great question for the idealistic side. Now one phase of that idealism is the love of beauty, the need of being surrounded by beautiful things, whether the creations of God or man, and this, I think, is one of the strongest characteristics of our people. . . . As our secretary Mr. Kent has well said in one of his addresses: 'The day is now past when a museum is considered to have done its duty by having collections and opening its doors to the public. A greater duty follows immediately upon that, which we are undertaking to do as well as we can, namely, the duty of educating and instructing the public in regard to the collections which they see in the museums.'"

To a more critical effect was the address of John E. D. Trask, formerly in charge of the art department of the Panama-Pacific Exposition. "Until," he said, "our art museums become, not historical museums but really art museums, they will not make their fullest appeal." He, too, spoke of the fact that beauty was an actual existent quality for which the soul of man either consciously or unconsciously hungered.

The driving point of Trask's remarks that art museums should exhibit contemporaneous work was one most acutely felt by all progressive American artists. Joseph Pennell a few years later called upon the directors of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City to devote some galleries to exhibitions of modern art and thus to "show live art, the work of living artists in its galleries instead of making itself into a graveyard of dead

art." Pennell pointed out that live museums in Chicago, Pittsburgh, and other cities did this and the public responded enthusiastically. Pennell might have explained, however, that many of the paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art came to be there because they were bequests of rich men's collections gathered at a time when only past art was thought important.

But to go back to the discussion at the Republican Club: Grosvenor Atterbury, architect, saw far beyond the confines of museums when he declared that: "It is the individual home that must contain the seed of the nation's art." This was a truth that might well have been elaborated with salutary results. Robert W. DeForest made "Art in every home" his theme at the Eleventh Annual Convention of the American Federation of Arts in 1920; one of that body's aims, he said, would be to enlarge museum circulating exhibitions of prints in colors and photographs showing plans of home decoration.

In recent years American manufacturers of many kinds of utilities have had specialists study art objects in museums for ideas to give designs of beauty to their wares. These products, made for popular sale, go into millions of homes and greatly stimulate the national palate for tastefully designed articles. The importance of the museums to the industrial arts has been frequently enlarged upon at conventions of the American Federation of Arts, speakers declaring that one of the highest services of any art museum to the public was in providing producers and distributors with inspiration for designs in home furnishings, costumes and in other fields.

So much for art museums. Meanwhile there had come into existence large numbers of art associations throughout the United States. To bring these in closer relation was one of the purposes of the American Federation of Arts formed in 1909. This organization now wields a great and permeating influence; the delegates attending its annual convention represent several hundred art



associations, societies and clubs. Year after year it has circulated in America, by means of traveling exhibitions, contemporary works by American artists with the object of making them known to the people. In 1820 a British critic wrote: "In the four quarters of the globe who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?" In 1924, at the request of the Municipality of Venice, the American Federation of Arts consented to assemble an exhibition of approximately eighty paintings by contemporary American artists to be shown at the International Biennial Exhibition at Venice.

Here another notable fact obtrudes. In European countries the encouragement of art galleries was ordained by centralized governments with the people having neither say nor share; in America public art museums have sprung from the people, with the National Government the very last factor to grant support. The American Federation of Arts has been trying energetically to induce Congress to give recognition to art as a power in national life by adequately sustaining the National Gallery at Washington. At this writing, the United States, although having a donated collection at the capital, is virtually the only great nation having no nationally-supported gallery or museum; the National Gallery of Art collection has been temporarily housed in most unsuitable quarters, surrounded by ethnological exhibits, in the National Museum Building. At all the conventions of the American Federation of Arts the zealous concern of the delegates is for the ever-increasing radius of the democracy of art. Thus, H. M. Kurtzworth, Director of the Kansas City Art Institute, speaking at the convention in 1924, said: "Yesterday art was for the few, but today it is for everyone. We must teach the nation to read beauty."

The captious may be inclined to ask why in this book we do not present in detail the list of philanthropic donations made by



rich Americans towards the encouragement of one or another of the arts.

The answer is simple. This narrative focuses itself not upon the doings and attitude of a class but upon those of the American people at large. To emphasize philanthropic gifts might convey the implication that Americans are a dependent people, relying for their cultural facilities upon the bounty of those who have too often exploited them economically. The truth is altogether the other way; the American people have impressed their spirit upon schools, colleges, libraries, art museums. The very gifts made by the rich have essentially been a recognition of the fact that to attain standing with the community a practical demonstration of regard for the general good had to be made.

Andrew Carnegie was but giving expression to the prevalent American detestation of the money hoarder when he said: "The day is coming, and already we see it dawn, in which the man who dies possessed of millions of available wealth which was free in his hands ready to be distributed, will die disgraced." Among Carnegie's vast gifts of money was the sum of \$2,000,000 in 1891 for the Carnegie Music Hall in New York City, and other large sums in backing the Pittsburgh orchestra and for the equipping of churches with pipe organs.

But Carnegie imperfectly understood the depths of American ideals. The independent spirit of American life has been increasingly veering away from patronization by money grandees. Various "Foundations" established by multimillionaires may have benevolent designs but they arouse no popular enthusiasm. On the contrary, they are often viewed with deep suspicion as insidious attempts by massed wealth to influence educational and other standards.

This fact—the utter failure of wealth to buy public confidence—is a most impressive token of the mettle of the American spirit. Let us consider a recent instance. The authority we

quote is Otto H. Kahn, a personage whose abilities an inscrutable decree of destiny has assigned to the field of finance. Preëminently his tastes and judgment are those of a born artist, and in the encouragement he has given he has been impelled solely by his love of art in all of its manifestations.

In an address on "Art and America" before the New York Drama League, on February 5, 1924, Mr. Kahn illustrated the repugnance of the American people to patronization by the rich. "I don't believe," he said, "that the New Theater, in the creation of which, fourteen years ago, I was one of the prime movers, would have failed—petered out, as it did, lamentably and unheroically—if it had not started with such conspicuous backing of wealth. I don't believe that the Theater Guild would have succeeded, so conspicuously and gratifyingly, if it had not been so poor. Moreover, the idea of a theater subsidized by one or a few rich men is somewhat out of tune with the American spirit. Its realization would, I surmise, meet with but limited sympathy on the part of the public, and the offerings of such a theater would be liable, I fear, to encounter a somewhat sardonic disposition on the part of the critics." . . .

This observation applies equally to all branches of the arts. In his endowments the multimillionaire may fatuously think that he is perpetuating his name and generosity. It is no guarantee of enduring note. Witness John Jacob Astor's endowment of the Astor Library in New York City. For a few decades his name was conspicuously preserved only to be later relegated to an almost complete obscurity when that and two other privately endowed libraries were merged in the New York Public Library.

Furthermore, the contrast between the spirit of the recent and present American artists and those generally of a half century ago is illuminatingly striking. Then many denationalized if not actually expatriated themselves. This did not in most cases arise from personal desire; in many cases the aim was the admixed

one of following the regulation course in Europe as well as being in a more favorable position to sell their work, receive orders and execute commissions. At a time when the American rich bought scarcely any American paintings or statuary at home and depended largely upon a European trip for the purchase of "artistic souvenirs" (a term then in vogue), the American artist had a hard problem and a lean time.

"We send our native artists to Paris or Rome or Munich or Düsseldorf to have their nationality and individuality polished off and supplanted by foreign characteristics which they can never wear with natural ease," complained an American critic after the Civil War. "They soon become un-Americanized under foreign influences, and identified with the schools of Italy, France or Germany where they study the principles of their art and with whose spirit they become imbued."

Refreshingly different has been the attitude of most American artists of our own generation. If they have gone to Europe it has resulted in no succumbing to an alien spirit or an old art. Their motto has been: "See what there is to be seen but retain the American spirit inviolate." Augustus Saint Gaudens, the sculptor, was an example. He wrote from Paris, on September 2, 1898, to Will H. Low: "But coming here has been a wonderful experience, surprising in many respects, one of them being to find out how much of an American I am. . . . I belong in America, that is where I want to be and remain. . . . I shall return a burning, hot-headed patriot." Further in his "Reminiscences" edited by his son, Homer, there is a letter written by Augustus Saint Gaudens, on December 20, 1905, in which he said that the older he grew the more convinced he was that thorough and adequate training could be had in America as well as abroad, and that the work of students in America was equal to that produced by those in Europe. "Of course," he explained, "Europe with its wealth and glory of art must be seen and imbibed sooner or

later. That goes without saying. But, I believe, for the American, the best time is after he has had a sound academical education here [in America].”

Just as America now gives the artist in the decorative fields effective advantages for native education, so the same situation is fast developing in the domain of musical culture.

Throughout all the long centuries aristocracy, whether of title or wealth, laved in the strange delusion that its ears were of a different texture from those of the common people and alone were attuned to the raptures of melody. The only music that the mass of people heard was in church or perchance what they performed themselves. Concerts and operas were dominated by the powerful and rich and well-to-do. As in the case of the decorative arts, there was long a prejudice, based upon religious grounds, among Puritans and Quakers in America. When concerts and operas were introduced they were but occasional, and necessarily music and performers were foreign.

With the advent of the opera as an established institution in America, the spirit denoting it as an enterprise was chiefly one of raw, barefaced patronage. Rich men and women backers were accorded the titles of “patrons” and “patronesses.” To them a distinguished and almost exclusive consideration was given. When, for example, the Metropolitan Opera House was built in 1883 the architect planned first of all for the parterre boxes to be occupied by these rich subscribers. The designing of the remainder of the house was evidently incidental, for the boxes were so arranged that while from them there was a full view of scenic effects they at the same time obstructed the view from other parts of the house. And, indeed, making allowance for exceptions, attendance in these boxes partook more of the nature of a glittering, gossipy social function giving unexcelled opportunity for the display of jeweled splendor. As a concession to poor music lovers weekly “popular concerts” were given later.



The antiquated conditions of the Metropolitan Opera House remain to this day. Otto H. Kahn, president of the board of directors of that institution, has favored the building of a new and properly equipped opera house, and it is reported that plans are under way.

"Mr. Kahn," said a recent newspaper account, "is said to feel these conditions keenly. One of the most appealing sights in New York is the patient line which winds out from the Metropolitan box office waiting for standing-room admittance. Many of these standees have been on their feet all day at work. Frequently they stand through snow and rain waiting for the ticket which will permit them to stand four hours longer through their favorite opera."

The patronage idea is most perceptibly becoming as archaic in the musical world as it became long since in the province of painting and sculpture. In some respects it has already been superseded by the truly American idea that inasmuch as music is or should be a part of cultural development, freer, fuller opportunities to study as well as to hear it should be at the disposal of the people.

Of the numerous evidences of this recognition, two notable examples may be cited. One is the Julliard Musical Foundation endowed by the will of Augustus D. Julliard, textile capitalist, with a fund estimated at an eventual \$15,000,000. The will provides that this fund is to "aid all worthy students" in obtaining an adequate musical instruction from competent instructors in America or abroad. It is further to be used in giving free musical entertainments, concerts and recitals "of a character appropriate for the education and instruction of the general public in the musical arts."

The question is whether the mere mandate of money can produce the result desired. And, again, what result is aimed at? Will the Foundation degenerate into an institutionalized affair,



unresponsive to the national spirit? Will it follow the traditions of European music or will it encourage a musical art expressive of the American temperament? Ejected long ago from American life, kings and queens and other discards have remained in opera to sing their tremulous anachronisms into American ears. A spirit of sadness may be natural to countries with enshrouding memories of a melancholy past, but it is palpably inappropriate among a people exuberantly living in the present and harboring radiant dreams of the future. Music critics have been extremely desirous to know what definite program the trustees of the Julliard Musical Foundation have had in view.

We now turn to the other example, that of the music culture project publicly initiated and to be maintained at the public expense. It starts with the confident assumption that America can develop its own superior instruction facilities, and seeks to coördinate kindred branches of the fine arts. Note the program of New York City's projected municipal Art Center. Whether this will materialize in the form in which it was originally suggested is a question; according to a recent report the latest plan is to establish a High School of the Arts. In point of fact, the whole project is still in the merest suggestive stages and may remain so for a considerable period, but the arguments advanced for its adoption are significant in the attitude they indicate.

In an exposition submitted to the Board of Estimate of New York City, March 6, 1924, Philip Berolzheimer, city chamberlain, and Joseph Haag, secretary of the Board of Estimate, constituting a committee to report upon the desirability of the project, made a favorable recommendation. They declared it would mean the democratization of music and the drama. Pointing out that there were in New York City various excellent musical societies and numerous private schools for the teaching of music, their report (published in the *City Record*, March 28, 1924) went on:

"On the other hand, there does not exist in this city a conservatory of music at which may be given, not what might be termed elementary instruction in the use of the voice and the performance upon musical instruments, but a higher education in these branches. We have many schools that teach thousands of scholars, but it seems that to acquire the higher training and due credit for it, one must go abroad to the long-established conservatories in Paris, Leipsic, Stuttgart, Berlin, Munich, Brussels, Vienna and other cities in Europe. . . . To correlate and bring together the many efforts and the many activities that now exist in this city, to harmonize wherever possible these efforts, would be an accomplishment worthy of the citizens of this city."

The plan embodied more than this extract describes. The building, the committee proposed, "should be an architectural triumph." And further: "It should contain auditoriums for the production of opera—two separate auditoriums, if necessary; another for concerts; another large auditorium for the production of the classic drama and comedy; and small auditoriums for chamber music and the intimate theater; rooms sufficient for practice rooms for both vocal and instrumental, and rooms to accommodate the conservatory of music. A building to accommodate a 'Musical Village' as expressed by one of our distinguished citizens and patrons of music. Provision might also be made for a salon at which the native artist could exhibit his creations. . . ."

In no sense is this a history of the technical or critical phases of the arts; it is exclusively an outline of American idealism underlying the development of the arts. This is no place for a narrative of the evolution of American architecture from the low plane it once generally occupied to its recent position of daring and conspicuous originality. A better qualified hand than mine can pen this story. Neither is this the place for a disquisition on the changed standards of some of the rich—particularly the

younger generation in their attitude toward the arts and American art specifically. A century or more ago the artist was forced to grovel before the rich; now we behold some sons and daughters of moneyed families either essaying to become artists or genuinely in quest of an atmosphere contributing some real distinctiveness.

There does remain a final aspect showing how large portions of the American people took steps to safeguard cities and States from the further imposition of bad sculptural and architectural design.

Philadelphia led the way with its Fairmount Park Commission established in 1872. In 1896 the New York legislature created the Municipal Art Commission authorized to pass upon all plans for statues, monuments and memorials. The Boston Commission was given like powers. In 1903 the Minnesota legislature, urged by the Federated Women's Clubs, established the State Art Society "to advance the interests of the fine arts, to develop the influence of art in education and to foster the interest of art in manufactures." The Pittsburgh Art Commission was created in 1911, and the Commission of Fine Arts of Washington, D. C., by act of Congress in 1910, supplemented by proclamation of President Wilson in 1913. Chicago, St. Louis, Denver, Baltimore, Rochester, New Haven, Hartford and many other cities were at different times authorized to have art commissions.

In various cities voluntary municipal art societies were established but they mostly disintegrated. They did not have public sympathy. The reason was clear: American artists had emancipated themselves personally from old traditions, but they had not acquired the social outlook which the American people demanded. They were too self-centered. At the Baltimore Art Conference, in December, 1899, Frederick S. Lamb explained why in many cities apathy had prevailed. "We speak of art for art's sake, and we complain of lack of appreciation," he said. "The lack of appreciation is on our side; we do not understand the age in

which we live; we do not appreciate the forces which surround us. . . . We speak of painting, we speak of architecture, and we speak of sculpture, and yet we never for a moment think of how we shall apply these various arts to our great cities." At the same time Edwin H. Blashfield urged the arts to make the public buildings, parks and squares as beautiful as possible; the people should be made to feel that the arts served them.

When this social spirit began to pervade the arts the gap between them and the American people was closed.

## CHAPTER XV

### LIBERTY FOR OTHER LANDS

ANY observer knowing the impelling spirit of the American people might well have been aware of the presence of an enormous, irrepressible force sure to manifest itself in further deeds. He might have known that a people which had given such convincing proofs of its idealism could not and would not allow itself to stop half-way. Of the practical demonstrations given by the American people other nations long had the opportunities to inform themselves. Had they cared to see they would have discerned the scope of these accomplishments, one following another, each the precursor of the next. Regardless of the checks that had seemed to intervene or of an occasional hiatus, the great movements for human progress had been carried successively to triumphant conclusions. This is no effusion; it is a plain statement of fact.

To be misled by the confusing interaction of forces at any given time is understandable. But when there unrolls before the student of affairs an instructive panorama of events as an unfailing guide in forming judgment, no good reason exists for error. The entire world had a clear index to the American spirit and character in the list of accomplishments which we have narrated. They were visible records. Each act by itself was noteworthy. In sequence and in mass the whole was toweringly impressive.

Yet, if we are to go by the comments made by many leading European publications, there was the deepest ignorance on that continent of the traditions, purposes and ideals of the American people. Stark ignorance is not so bad, for it can be remedied with knowledge. This, however, was a willful, mendacious ignorance, glutting itself upon misinformation.



From America had emanated mighty influences which had already brought about revolutions, changes, stirrings or smolderings in other lands. In two decades they were to produce greater revolutions politically and socially, throughout the world. These traversing influences were predominantly the offspring of American ideals.

But, astonishing as the fact may seem, European ruling classes and their appendages in general did not acknowledge the existence of any ideals in America. On the very eve, as it were, of their being hurled from power, they were blind, or chose to be blind, to the force of ideas about to engulf them. They preferred to estimate the American people by the qualities shown by a particular class of Americans. Because a certain group of Americans were ravenous for great riches, bribed and otherwise corrupted, were plundering in their business methods, and often bought titled husbands for their daughters, European rulers, statesmen and journalists in the main believed this group representative of the American people. This perversion was ludicrous, considering that, as we shall see, the American people at large had constantly been attacking corporate and private fraud, greed and predaciousness. The fact that Americans as a people had done so and increasingly were doing so was notoriously patent, yet it was hardly recognized in Europe.

When, in 1898, the United States went to war with Spain to free Cuba, a considerable part of the European press—reflecting the views of rulers and ruling classes—could see in Americans only a mercenary, selfish, domineering, material people whose every action was open to suspicion and whose expressions of altruism were hypocritical.

Here, as Professor Giddings wrote, was a population of seventy or more million souls, "the most stupendous reservoir of human energy to be found on any continent." Yet, spiritually speaking, it was unknown to most of the misnamed statesmen of Europe.

Had they even glimpsed the realities of American life they would have seen that a people whose heart was set upon democracy could not but be impatient that close to their shores despotic monarchical rule remained. In Cuba there had been various revolts, some incipient, all futile. Americans had not been indifferent, but unfortunately the slavery issue had prevented the help that otherwise would have been given. A large number of Americans had wanted no augmentation of slavery territory. Attempts before the Civil War to seize Cuba by filibustering expeditions or acquire its annexation by national purchase were viewed as a move to extend the power of the slaveholding oligarchy.

The example of America's Civil War and its freeing the Negro slaves was the prime influence leading to the ten years' insurrection in Cuba beginning in 1868. So strong were American sympathies with Cuba that the United States was then almost drawn into war with Spain. But we were just beginning to recover from the effects of the Civil War; the American people, anything but a warlike nation, were wearied of the very mention of war, and had their own vexatious racial and reconstruction problems to settle.

Slaves in Cuba gradually won their freedom, but the people were still subject to Spain's unenlightened, arbitrary rule, verging upon the medieval. There was no freedom of speech, press or religion. The masses were denied public school education; ecclesiasticism dominated. Cubans had no security of person or property. The judiciary were instruments of the military authorities. Trials by military tribunals were at the will of the Captain-General. All of Cuba's principal industries were hampered by excessive imposts, and in every conceivable way commerce with every country but Spain was crippled. For twenty-five years successive American Presidents had arraigned Spain for its misdoings and cruelties in Cuba.

In 1895 came another revolt in Cuba. As it went on, marked by furious determination on the part of the Cubans and ferocious reprisals by the Spanish military, the sympathies of the American people waxed ever stronger. There were now no sectional issues to divert the whole American people from performing what they believed a long-delayed duty. President McKinley, having served in one war, well knew the horrors of war, and was not willing to commit the nation to war if it could be avoided. He tried to obtain peaceable adjustment but did not succeed.

Americans chafed under the Administration's course. In 1896 indignant protests were made in Congress. Senator Sherman said it would be a mighty gain to education, religion and civilization when the Republic of Cuba took its place among the nations of the world. Senator Lodge demanded that the Cuban cause secure American sympathy. Senator Frye said that he was weary and heartsick to see the splendid American Republic, its foundation stones the equal rights of man, doing police duty for the most wicked despotism on earth. Senator Allen said that he would not only recognize the belligerent rights of Cuba but, if need be, would muster every man in the United States and every war vessel to eject Spanish authority and establish a Cuban republic modeled after the institution of our own.

From every part of the United States, North, East, South and West, from cities and villages and farms, came the thunderous demand that Cuba should be free and that the United States should employ its entire power to expel Spanish rule.

According to a statement made in Congress by Senator Bacon later—on February 27, 1901—President McKinley believed that if the United States warred upon Spain it might have to face a European coalition. Senator Bacon told how McKinley called a conference of Senators of all parties to whom he presented his views of the situation. "President McKinley," said Senator Bacon in his speech, "was most earnestly opposed to war, and

earnestly desired promotion of peace, and I remember distinctly that as we parted in the Cabinet room, the last words he said to us were, 'Senators, remember if we have war it may be a world's war.' "

The sinking of the American battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor, February 15, 1898, inflamed the entire American nation and made war inevitable. But the United States was unprepared. A bill to appropriate \$50,000,000 for national defense was carried in Congress without a dissenting vote. On April 11, 1898, President McKinley sent a message to Congress justifying intervention.

With these familiar matters of record, related in every history of the United States, the purpose of this book is not concerned. The thing which is of vital interest here is the spirit shown by members of Congress in the debates on March 8, 11, and 15 and on April 13, 16, and 29, 1898. It will be seen that in almost every instance they gave utterance to sentiments which were the result of the line of idealistic accomplishments of the American people. The principles they expressed were precisely those fixed in the American mind by the force of those accomplishments.

America was known abroad for one doctrine only, the Monroe Doctrine. But it had other doctrines of even wider application. These doctrines had never been officially proclaimed and gazetted; they were instinctive with the American people and all the more tenaciously potent because they were instinctive.

Various and succinctly expressed by members of Congress they were: It was America's duty to help a new republic against monarchy. It was the duty of the American people to assist a people struggling for liberty. Monarchy on the Western Hemisphere had to go. The divine right claim of kings must be supplanted by the diviner right of peoples. Americans could never be indifferent to the call of humanity. They must at all



times be foremost in defending national honor. Subsidiary to these doctrines were three reasons for going to war. One was that America was under moral obligation to help Cuba as France had helped America. The second was that as Cuba was at our doors, further injury to trade and commerce should not be tolerated. And finally (to be true to actual history) some Southern members made the suggestion that so long as war had to come, it would, by uniting men of the North and South in the same cause, completely heal whatever sectional feeling remained from the Civil War period.

Senators and Representatives of all parties, Republican, Democratic and Populist, agreed in the enunciation of these doctrines.

"A war in aid of liberty," said Senator Stewart, "is a war in which the American people are ever willing to engage."

Senator Cannon: "If we keep our motive pure and our purpose high we will be sustained by Providence. We will vindicate ourselves to our consciences, to the wisdom and honor of the world . . . and when the war shall have ended, the United States will be able, I trust, to write a story of the deed in this one sentence: 'The hand of God moved this country to destroy in Cuba the divine right of kings and establish there the divine right of the people.'"

Senator Fairbanks: "It is instinctive with us to see people who are oppressed freed from the oppressor, and secured in the God-given, inalienable privileges of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Senator Wolcott: "We will not benefit materially. We must find our only satisfaction, and it must be the supreme satisfaction of a free people, in this, that we have poured out our blood and our treasure to relieve the cry of suffering humanity."

Senator Lindsay: "Shall republican America show herself less generous than monarchic France showed herself one hundred and twenty years ago?"



Senator Lodge: "There are some things, horrible as war is, worse than war and better than money. A nation's honor is one thing, and her duty to humanity is another. . . . If war must be—and I hope and pray that it yet may be avoided—no nation ever went to war on higher grounds or more disinterested motives."

Representative Moon: "We have said that when kingly power was broken on American soil it should never be reestablished, a doctrine essential to the protection of human liberty and the perpetuation of the principles of republics."

Representative Dinsmore: "Americans love peace. The occupations of Americans are peaceful occupations. Peace always before war. But while Americans deplore war more than any other people, there is no people who fear it less."

Representative McRae: "Our forefathers cut a pathway for humanity and liberty throughout the world. Shall we, their descendants, permit the arrest of this march of progress by the stifling of this latest-born republic?"

These are a typical few of the long array of utterances published in the *Congressional Record*. A significant fact here bespeaks attention. Some of the Senators were millionaires and multimillionaires who had obtained their elections by the sheer force of corporate power or personal disbursement. Other Senators had been attorneys for great corporate or private wealth. These men were supposed to represent and exalt money. Ordinarily they did. But in this crisis they neither talked nor acted in that character at all. They became simple Americans, expressing exactly the same sentiments as the Populist Senators across the aisle or the man in the street. Their usual considerations for property interests vanished and they could think of American ideals only.

On April 19, 1898, Congress adopted a war resolution declaring that the people of Cuba should of right be free and independent; that it was the duty of the United States to demand that Spain

at once relinquish its authority and withdraw its land and naval forces; and authorizing President McKinley to use the necessary land and naval strength of the United States to carry these resolutions into effect. The fourth article of these resolutions contained this solemn pledge: "That the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction or control over said island, except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination when that is accomplished to leave the government and control of the island to the people."

With few exceptions, the European press sneered at American motives. In editorials and articles the charge was made or insinuated that America was using false pretenses, and that behind its declarations, characterized as high-sounding phrases, was a lust for land and gold.

The *Temps* of Paris, which was accredited with generally voicing French official opinion, had said before the resolution was passed: "The American people are intoxicated by their feeling of strength; they believe that Monroeism is the alpha and omega of international law, and they see in Cuba a right tempting morsel." The *Speaker* of London referred to the American "lust for empire." The *Edinburgh News* said that "the Yankee is thirsting for blood." The *Westminster Gazette* and the *Spectator* approved the American stand. So did *The Academy* of London, which said that Americans had "a passionate resolve to keep the blood tax from the Americas, and to see that the New World is not made a scene for the repetitions of the feuds and ambitions of Europe." The *Saturday Review* of London bitterly assailed America. "We are all disgusted," one issue said, "with these raw, vulgar, blatant Americans who scour Europe in search of their self-respect and cannot conduct a mere legal case with decency." Said another article in the same publication: "We are told that America represents the cause of civilization, humanity and progress, while Spain represents

medieval barbarism and cruelty. We should like a little better evidence of the proposition. . . . Should we miss most the oil and the corn and the iron and the pigs, or the poetry of Calderon, the art of Velasquez, the immortal fiction of Cervantes? All these would be regarded as 'back numbers' in New York or Chicago, but the world will remember them; and what will it care to remember about America?" A later issue of the *Saturday Review* said that Michael Davitt was probably right in his assertion that the ruling aristocratic class in England wished for Spanish success.

The *Heraldo* of Madrid said: "The United States is for all the world like an upstart who thinks he can do what he pleases because he has a few dollars, and fancies all the world is after him. We believe the Americans really think the world admires their conduct. But the European press on the whole admire the conduct of Spain. We, at least, need not brag of our prowess. Spain's reputation is established." Very few German or Italian periodicals or newspapers supported America's stand.

As an indication of the view in Germany, let us quote in full this comment published in the *Gegenwart*, an influential weekly in Berlin: "Europe watches, with folded arms, the vilest and most baseless war in history. No war has ever been more unjust. But even that could pass. But never has war or peace been decided upon in a more coarse and unworthy manner than in Congress. The modern financial dynasties of the world demand recognition and the legitimate monarchs do not resist the claims because they read aright the signs of the times. But they protest against the enormously 'honest cheek' with which the Washington jobbers acknowledge their desire to make money as the only motive of their actions. The European man cannot stomach avarice pure and undiluted. The European powers have allowed much impudence to pass unnoticed—even the promulgation of

that foolish Monroe Doctrine—because America is so powerless. But if Europe's stately excellencies and crowned heads have it poked under their noses continually that, despite their millions of soldiers, they cannot prevent the assumption of power equal to theirs by ex-pedlars and dealers in rabbit skins, these princes may arise in their wrath." Read in the light of later world events how ironically amusing such an outburst becomes!

Andrew D. White, then American Ambassador to Germany, wrote in his "Autobiography" that various newspapers in Germany charged our government with a wonderful assortment of high crimes and misdemeanors, but that happily in their eagerness to cover America with obloquy, they frequently refuted one another. "Thus they one day charged us with having prepared long beforehand to crush Spain and to rob her of her West Indian possessions, and the next day they charged us with plunging into the war suddenly, recklessly, utterly careless of the consequences. One moment they insisted that American sailors belonged to a deteriorated race of mongrels and could never stand against pure-blooded Spanish sailors; and the next moment that we were crushing the noble navy of Spain by brute force. . . . Against President McKinley every sort of iniquity was charged. One day he was an idiot; another day, the most cunning of intriguers; at one moment an overbearing tyrant anxious to rush into war; at another a coward fearing war." We need not tell how the German admiral at Manila harbor gave evidences of hostility to Admiral Dewey's plans and was frustrated by the action of the British admiral; this story is all part of regular history.

The European newspaper and periodical comments reproduced here are not inserted with any foolish intention of perpetuating national prejudices. It is necessary to dwell upon them because of their lucidly showing how little understood were America and



its historic ideals. And, to tell the full truth, we have to point to the fact that right across our border, in eastern Canada itself, utterance was given to the same false conceptions. *Secular Thought*, published in Toronto, said of Cuba: "To pass from the control of Spain to that of Wall Street, for this is what it means, would be to fall out of the frying pan into the fire." The *Montreal Daily Witness* berated "American pugnacity." The periodical *Saturday Night* of Toronto denounced Americans as having "the strength of the terrible predatory instinct of a people who worship money, conquest and an ability to crow as the owners of the earth."

On the other hand, there were some remarkable aspects to the comments of the American newspapers and periodicals. Some of the most clear-sighted editorials, containing both perspicacity and prescience, came from newspapers in Southern cities. The *Richmond Times* said that for years it had been pointing out that the real struggle of the future was between democracy and autocracy—a prophetic verity, indeed. The *Mobile Register* pronounced Admiral Dewey's victory at Manila epoch-making: "Hereafter the rule shall be that so far as this continent is concerned government shall exist by consent of the governed."

Another striking feature of the attitude of the American press was the position of the religious publications of all denominations. Many of these sects were notable for their convictions on the subject of peace and for their long adherence to peace movements. The ideal of the possibility of abolishing war was a fairly old one in American life. Peace societies, started by clergymen, flourished in many cities and states. The American Peace Society came into existence in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1814; at one time Ralph Emerson was a member of its executive committee. This society was the parent and model of various other and later formed societies. With this ideal of world peace we shall have occasion to deal in a subsequent chapter.



Suffice to say here that deep-rooted as was their aversion to war, religious publications believed that intervention in behalf of Cuba was a transcendent American duty, outweighing all other considerations. The Quaker *Friends Intelligencer*; the Baptist *Watchman*; the Evangelist *Observer*; the undenominational *Christian Work*; and the *Independent*, *The American Hebrew* and other religious periodicals approved American intervention in Cuba. The *Kingdom*, a Christian Socialist periodical published in Minneapolis, declared that the war was one on a high moral plane. "It will stimulate the great qualities of magnanimity and unselfishness of a Christian people who can spend life and treasure, not for self-protection and self-aggrandizement but for humanity. . . . It is sublime, this rallying of a great people to the defense of what they believe to be humane and just. It is a new example to the nations."

Finally there was the stand of the organs of the Populist Party, largely a farmers' organization preaching what were then considered radical doctrines, and in general inclined to condemn financiers as well as monarchs as responsible for wars. Its publications approved the war. "The ideas of reform," said the *Farmers' Sentinel*, published at Chicago, "are in the brains of the people. A love of equity, liberty and justice has been engendered, and nothing can eradicate it from the hearts of the people. Thrones are tottering. We often hear it said that people are already born who will live to see a republican form of government throughout Europe."

The liberation of Cuba had been, of course, the object of the war. The emancipation of Porto Rico was a coördinate accompaniment. But the taking of the distant Philippines was an unexpected development. Once the Philippines were captured, American sentiment declared that it would be an everlasting infamy to return them to Spain. Senator Hoar of Massachusetts

expressed the prevailing view when he wrote: "I should as soon give back a redeemed soul to Satan as give back the people of the Philippine Islands to the cruelty and tyranny of Spain." Had the United States followed European standards it would and could have claimed sovereign possession by right of conquest. It, however, adhered to its own precedent set after the war with Mexico; it paid Spain \$20,000,000 in gold for relinquishment of all rights in the Philippines.

Among the first things that the American Government did in Cuba was to send a medical and sanitary corps to cleanse Cuban cities. Under Spanish rule these cities had long been allowed to remain in cumulatively foul condition, productive of epidemics of disease. The competent, indefatigable exertions of this sanitary commission brought about a most rapid and wonderful improvement.<sup>1</sup>

Here the brilliant work of Dr. Walter Reed of Virginia, a surgeon in the United States Army, should be especially noted. Carefully studying cases of yellow fever in Cuba he decided that it was a waste of time to look for the germ but that the important consideration was to discover how it spread. To test the suggestion made decades previously by Dr. J. C. Nott of Mobile, and by Dr. Carlos J. Findlay, practicing in Havana, that a certain species of mosquito carried the disease, Dr. Reed, with the assistance of other American doctors, conclusively demonstrated this to be the fact. He died on November 22, 1902,

<sup>1</sup> The report, in 1900, of Major W. C. Gorgas, American Chief Sanitary Officer of the City of Havana, showed that during the ten years up to 1899 the average annual death rate in Havana was 45.83 per 1,000 population, and that after the American sanitary corps had carried out their measures the death rate fell to 24.40 per 1,000 in 1900. Many of the streets had no sewers; the houses and neighborhoods of the poorer class were in an extremely filthy condition. The American corps made a house-to-house inspection ordering compliance with sanitary regulations established: it inspected the city's milk supply; opened a vaccine department and systematically inspected bakeries, butcher shops, markets, hotels, cafés, grocery stores, stables and other places.

from the effects of an operation for appendicitis; the inscription on his monument in Arlington Cemetery closes with this tribute: "He gave to man control over that dreadful scourge, yellow fever."

Hundreds of new schools were established in Cuba and various public works energetically pushed and completed. In 1901 the United States Government carried out the pledge Congress had made in the declaration of war; it withdrew all jurisdiction and in 1902 Cuba became an independent nation—the Republic of Cuba. At the same time opposition, largely of a partisan nature, was made in the United States to America's retaining control over Porto Rico and the Philippines. The charge was made that America was becoming "imperialistic"; the word "imperialism" was much harped upon. The debates in Congress showed some of the reasons why the Administration resolved to hold American control.

There was a very deep apprehension that if outlying possessions were allowed to shift for themselves, strong European nations might attempt bullying or appropriating tactics. Speakers in Congress gave reminders of fairly recent actions by at least two European powers in respectively rushing warships to San Domingo and Central America, with threats to bombard cities if certain debts were not paid. Germany's action in extorting Chinese territory in reprisal for the murder of a missionary did, in fact, show the land-grabbing length to which spoliation of a weak people could be carried.

And parenthetically at this point, it may be appropriately remarked that the United States was the first of the nations to set the standard of remitting indemnities. It did this in 1891 when it returned the excess of an indemnity paid by feudal Japan for an outrage during an anti-foreign agitation in 1863 when an American vessel was fired upon. It did the same in

1894 in returning to China the excess of an indemnity paid for an incident in 1857. In 1907 the United States Government remitted to China the full indemnity of about \$25,000,000 chargeable in installments upon China for loss of American life and damage to American property during the Boxer uprising against foreigners in Peking, in July, 1900. The condition of the remission was that the fund should be used to send annually one hundred Chinese students to study in American educational institutions.

Later, there was a transaction which at the time seemed to give grounds for impugning America's reputation for generous and honorable international dealings. This matter was the revolution in Panama in 1903, the creation of the Panama Republic, the cession of a zone there to the United States, and the building of the Panama Canal by America. President Theodore Roosevelt was the target of bitter partisan criticism for the alleged high-handed action of his Administration in promoting or at least encouraging the secession of Panama from the Republic of Colombia. But his supporters claimed that Colombia, by its long-continued obstructive tactics, had actually been responsible for Panama's secession, and that the paramount needs of the world and America's urgent interests required the construction of the Panama Canal. The United States agreed to pay Panama large sums for the cession of rights, but Colombia was left uncompensated. When the United States Senate in 1921 ratified the long-pending treaty with Colombia agreeing to pay that republic \$25,000,000, many Americans hailed the act as one which had vindicated America's record for high political morality.

To return to the subject of Porto Rico and the Philippines: In addition to the firm belief that it was the duty of the American people to give their full protection to the population of those islands, there was also a deep-seated conviction that it would



be reprehensible on the part of America not to extend its institutions there. Capitalist groups were accused, and not unjustly, of planning to exploit the resources of the newly acquired possessions. But the American people at large were not thinking of material gains. They thought only of the great responsibility devolving upon them and of their destined mission to see to it that people long held under military and ecclesiastical domination should be educated and prepared for self-government.

About the status of Porto Rico there was little doubt. Its contiguity to the United States and the composition of its population, dominantly the white race, made the problem fairly simple. The affairs of that island could be administered territorially pending its admission as a future self-governing part of the United States. But the disposition of the Philippines was a thorny question. They were far away from the United States. Their nineteen varyingly large and their approximately fifteen hundred lesser islands contained a population of perhaps 10,000,000, overwhelmingly Filipino. The character of the inhabitants ranged from the civilized to the primitive and near savage. Different dialects and religions prevailed. In parts of the Philippines the monastic orders were entrenched and all-powerful. Originally their purpose was purely missionary, but in time they became rich, dictatorial and oppressive. According to a report of the Taft Commission, the tenure of any Spanish civil or military officer who opposed the course ordered by the monastic orders was invariably cut short. Filipino revolts against Spain in 1896 and 1898 began, this Commission reported, as movements against the friars.

Now if there was anything calculated to arouse the concern of the great majority of Americans it was ecclesiastical power and tyranny. As we have seen, the overthrowing of these was the first great battle of the American people. The principles and



ideals then established remained deeply embedded, so deeply in fact that the superficial observer might be inclined to think that the feeling was a past instead of an ever-present one. That schooling should be a practical monopoly of religious orders collided with another American ideal from which in part, as we have shown, the prodigious public school educational system arose.

Large numbers of Americans were in a state of doubt what to do. Different sets of principles conflicted. It was felt that America should perform its historic function of welcoming and recognizing a new republic in the Philippine Republic. On the other hand, it was evident that the Filipinos were far from prepared for taking care of their own interests and for establishing the elements of a true democracy. Would not America be unpardonably remiss in its duty if it did not adequately prepare the Filipino people for their new position in the world?

The general perplexity was reflected in the United States Senate. On a resolution declaring the intention to treat the Filipinos in the same way as the United States was pledged to Cuba, the vote was a tie, the Vice President casting the deciding negative vote. Later, a resolution was passed by the Senate avowing the purpose of the United States not to make the Filipinos American citizens or their land American territory but to establish a government adapted to Filipino needs and in time settle the question according to the interests of both Filipinos and the United States.

The settled policy of the United States as expressed by President McKinley and his successors has held America to be a trustee for the Filipinos.

President McKinley's instructions to the first Philippine Commission, January 20, 1899, declared: "The Philippines are ours, not to exploit, but to develop, to civilize, to educate, to train in the science of self-government. This is the path of duty

which we must follow or be recreant to a mighty trust committed to us." When Governor of the Philippine Islands, President Taft, in 1903, declared that the motto of the United States was to preserve the Philippines for the Filipinos. "Whether," he said, "an autonomy or independence or quasi-independence shall ultimately follow in these Islands ought to depend solely on the question: Is it best for the Filipino people and their welfare?" In 1908, after the Philippine Assembly had been opened, President Roosevelt in his message said: "I trust that within a generation the time will arrive when the Filipinos can decide for themselves whether it is well for them to become independent or to continue under the protection of a strong and disinterested power, able to guarantee the Islands order at home and protection from foreign invasion." President Wilson, in a message to the Filipino people delivered by Governor Harrison in Manila, October 6, 1913, said: "We regard ourselves as trustees acting not for the advantage of the United States but for the benefit of the people of the Philippine Islands. Every step we take will be taken with a view to the ultimate independence of the islands as a preparation for that independence."

On August 29, 1916, Congress passed an act containing a resolution that it always had been the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and recognize their independence as soon as a stable government could be established. Representative Jones, the author of this act, described it as "the everlasting covenant of a great and generous people, speaking through their representatives that they [the Filipinos] shall in due time enjoy the incomparable blessings of liberty and freedom." The foremost spokesman of the Filipino people, Sergio Osmena, Speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives, in accepting this act in behalf of the Filipinos, said: "Henceforward, we can look

upon the American flag not as a symbol of imposed government but as the emblem of a nation whose temporary guidance over the Filipino people will serve as an instrumentality for the most speedy assumption of the responsibility of an independent life."

## CHAPTER XVI

### CREATING SELF-GOVERNING PEOPLES

WHEN Porto Rico and the Philippines came under American control the most energetic efforts were made to establish public school systems.

Spain had ruled Porto Rico for more than four hundred years. In 1899 Porto Rico had nearly a million population. Of 322,393 children of school age, only 25,558 children received education. There were no school buildings on the island; the five hundred and twenty-five schools were conducted, as a rule, in teachers' residences. Existing schools were for the favored: the children of the poor were denied education. Approximately eighty-five per cent. of the population could neither read nor write.

No one in Porto Rico was permitted to speak or spread political or religious ideas except such as the Government authorized. The peonage system of labor prevailed. Laborers were forced to accept whatever pay the masters gave. The organization of labor was prohibited and held to be a crime. Anyone daring to agitate for better wages or shorter hours of work was arbitrarily imprisoned. The toilers lived in an almost animal state. "They were made to believe that their mission was determined by divine fate, and that as this was to be their lot, they might as well work on patiently without any other ambition than that of serving the master until death and turn over to him the total product of their labor. And the toilers were generally converted to this belief, and accordingly were not able to stand up like men and fight exploitation." This was part of a description given by P. Rivera Martinez, a prominent Porto Rican labor leader, in his testimony before the United States Industrial Commission on May 26, 1915.

The first acts of the military government commissioned by the United States to rule Porto Rico after its acquisition granted workers the right of organization and the benefit of a law limiting work to eight hours a day. A pioneer labor leader who had been imprisoned for seven months for agitating for better conditions was immediately released. Absolute freedom of speech and the free exercise of political and religious beliefs were guaranteed. Sanitary measures were carried out. Public schools were established along with the American system of medical examination of children.

In the very first year under the American occupation \$279,216 was appropriated for education; within a few years the annual school budget was increased to more than \$3,000,000 as compared with a small expenditure appropriated by the Spanish Government for schools in which, as we said, children of the influential only were educated. From the time of American occupation, particular attention was given to the opening of schools in the rural districts where no educational facilities had ever existed.

By successive acts of Congress Porto Rico was given its own local legislative powers, with a general directing, supervising and administration by a Governor and other officials appointed by the President of the United States. The Governor also appoints certain heads of departments, subject to the approval of the Porto Rican Senate.

Occasionally, complaints have been made against the conduct or tendencies of some American governors. One of them especially was charged with being altogether too responsive to the influences and interests of trusts having great power in Porto Rico. But, unlike conditions under Spanish rule, redress was obtainable; there was no bar to presenting the facts to the Government at Washington.

The really deep, embittered complaints of the Porto Rican laboring class, however, were not against the acts of these Ameri-



can officials but were directed against Porto Rican politicians. In his testimony in 1915 Martinez told how the reactionary party, flushed with wealth and resourceful in tactics, secured political ascendancy in legislative and municipal affairs and proceeded to oppress labor. "Just as soon," he testified, "as these politicians began to enjoy the benefits of self-government in pursuance of the establishment of civil government, disturbances took place; regrettable incidents were committed, assassinations, etc.; the laborers were prosecuted and their federations closed; the right of free speech or discussion and holding of public meetings was suppressed. . . . Then it was that the President of the United States had to intervene, and he became conscious that a more close vigilance had to be exercised with the office holders of that island."

These reactionaries, Martinez further related, sought in every way in their legislation and decisions "to favor capitalists, merchants and corporations"; they had tried to cripple the public school system by curtailing accommodations and by seeking to excite prejudice against American methods of teaching and against American teachers. Santiago Iglesias, organizer of the American Federation of Labor in Porto Rico, testified that about 60 per cent. of Porto Rican voters were controlled by masters and corporations. In defiance of the local law limiting corporation holdings to five hundred acres of land, corporations controlled from twenty to fifty thousand acres. He pleaded for the granting of the right of American citizenship to all Porto Ricans.

The testimony of M. Travieso, Secretary of the Porto Rican Government, contradicted the labor leader's statements and explained that the curtailing of school appropriations was only comparative; that, at a time when prosperous conditions prevailed, very large appropriations had been made, but that when conditions changed it had been necessary to reduce them, and

that the reduction fell upon the university and other higher educational institutions.

The Jones Act, passed by Congress on March 2, 1917, extended American citizenship to all Porto Ricans and gave them manhood suffrage. In 1921-22 Porto Rico's population was 1,299,809. It had 3,642 schoolrooms, and 226,171 of a total of 452,446 children of school age attended school. The annual school expenditures amounted to \$5,150,841. Illiteracy has been greatly reduced in Porto Rico.

A graphic description of how Americans established schools in the Philippines is contained in Vol. III of the 1905 "United States Census of the Philippine Islands."

In origin and history, Spanish schools in the Philippines were missionary enterprises, conducted under the direct supervision of the Church. Teachers were educated and appointed by the parish priest from whom they received their scanty pay. There was no general plan of instruction; such information as was taught was chiefly from a religious catechism. By royal decree of December 20, 1863, there was founded a nominal general system of primary schools to be under municipal control and to be free. These schools, however, were pretenses; the teachers gave most of their time to pupils paying fees, and the influence of the priests was all-powerful. The first United States Philippine Commission reported that these schools were superficial and of little consequence. "The only history ever taught was that of Spain, and that under conventional censorship. The history of other nations was a closed book to the average Filipino." Of other subjects the same was true.

As American military commander, General Otis took immediate steps to reopen such schools as had existed and established new schools. He himself selected and ordered the best textbooks. Numerous officers, including chaplains, were detailed as superintendents of schools, and many enlisted men as teachers.

Wherever the American flag was raised, a public school was soon established; about one thousand schools were opened by the military commanders. In 1900 a regularly organized school system was introduced, and by September, 1901, there had been appointed many hundreds of American teachers who had come from the United States. English now became the only medium of instruction.

"The difficulties encountered by these teachers were great," says the official account. "Some of them built their own school-houses, made the benches and taught the children for months without books, slates or maps. Others taught under a spreading tree or in their own houses. One superintendent upon opening a schoolhouse, found it inhabited by forty-five goats." The report further says that teachers were obliged to conciliate local priests "and sometimes go from house to house persuading the parents of the children to send them to school." In some cases, when municipal funds were lacking, these American teachers paid the salaries of Filipino assistants.

The depth to which the principles of the successive great American movements against ecclesiasticism, monarchy, aristocracy, caste ideas, monopoly of learning and slavery had been engraved in American character was shown in the plan for schools in the Philippines. In his report, September 30, 1903, to the Secretary of Public Instruction, Dr. David P. Barrows, General Superintendent of the Bureau of Education, outlined the scope and purposes of this school system. Summarized, his report stated:

"American schools must be public and secular. There must be separation of church and school instruction; the intellectual advance of the Filipino people must be unaffected by ecclesiastical control. Public schools must be open to all upon a purely democratic basis. The cultivated man among the Filipinos, while fairly bursting with protestations of patriotic solicitude for the advance-

ment of his more humble countrymen, is in reality frequently contemptuous of their illiteracy and poverty and actually opposed to any enlightenment which will loosen his hold upon them. Public welfare and public security demand here, as nowhere else in the world, primary education for all classes. The race lends itself naturally and without protest to the blind leadership and cruel oppression of the aristocracy. This is what the Spaniard called *caciquismo*, which every measure and plan of government of these islands should aim to destroy. Further, our public school system should be adequate to the population. The rural spots where the great mass of the population live, are centers of ignorance and have been so for three hundred years. The ladrones have perpetuated their ignorance and poverty. We must spread enlightenment and moral training." Slavery, one of the props of aristocracy, had been allowed under complaisant Spanish rule, and actually existed, openly in some places, and in others, insidiously. The American authorities took every possible means to eradicate it.

In his book on "The Philippines Past and Present," Dean C. Worcester, who was a member of the Philippine Commission from 1900 to 1913, tells how, upon their arrival, Americans found that educated Filipinos held honest manual labor in contempt. He further relates that many of those who had managed to obtain professional education did not practice their professions but preferred to live a life of ease. The Bureau of Education, he says, brought about a profound change in public sentiment. Also, before American occupation Filipinos had never learned to play; real athletic games were unknown. The first that the Filipinos saw of these were American soldiers' games. "Gradually Filipinos became interested enough to attend contests of this nature. Later, through the influence of American teachers they began to take part in them. Today the athletic policy of the Bureau of Education is heartily approved by all classes.



Eighty per cent. of pupils now participate in some form of athletics."

Right of suffrage was given to Filipinos in 1900. The first Philippine Assembly elected by the people was inaugurated in 1907, taking over a participation in law-making which hitherto had been exercised wholly by the Philippine Commission. By the latter part of 1913 the Filipinos were in complete control of the legislative powers by reason of the appointment by President Wilson of a majority of Filipinos to the Philippine Commission, constituting the upper branch of the legislature. The Jones Act, passed by Congress in 1916, abolished the Philippine Commission and created in its place an elective Philippine Senate. The Governor-General, appointed by the President of the United States, remained and still remains as the head of administration of the islands. The two houses of the legislature have been and are composed entirely of Filipinos. Likewise the municipalities—about one thousand in all—have for years been governed by elective Filipino officials.

During the World War, Filipino loyalty to the United States was strikingly proved and drew high praise from President Wilson and Governor-General Harrison. The withdrawal of American troops from the Philippines made it necessary for the Filipinos themselves to keep peace and order, and they did it. They placed at the disposal of the United States a division of 25,000 men which was ready to go to France at the time the armistice was signed. They contributed a submarine and a destroyer to the American fleet, and 6,000 Filipinos were serving as volunteers in the United States Navy. The financial resources of the Filipinos were not great, but that people made much larger contributions and subscriptions than it was expected they could make. They voluntarily gave \$500,000 to the Red Cross funds, and subscribed nearly \$20,000,000 to Liberty bonds.

Their tact during the World War was remarkable. For years



they had been asking for independence. But during the World War they allowed the entire question to be in abeyance. "They have acted with the greatest moderation and the greatest self-restraint, and with the greatest respect for the American flag," said Governor-General Harrison in a speech to the Merchants' Association of New York, on April 17, 1919. "The talk of independence, which has been the subject of discourse by every schoolboy who arose on every occasion when he was given a chance for many years past, was stilled during the war. It was not because the Filipino people lost interest in independence, but it was because the Filipino people thought it not respectful to the United States to raise the question of independence at a time when the United States was engaged in the greatest struggle in the course of history."

Under American guidance, the Philippine school system constantly expanded, enlisting the eager attachment of the Filipino people. Efficient Filipino teachers, trained by Americans, now largely replaced American teachers. Between 1912 and 1918 the number of children in school increased from 440,000 to 675,000, a gain of 54 per cent. in six years. During the same period the number of intermediate pupils grew to 67,000, a gain of 100 per cent.; and the number of high school students reached 16,000, a gain of 220 per cent. This, too, in a land which had no compulsory attendance law.

"The public schools are becoming more influential each year," said the Twentieth Annual Report (1920) of the Director of Education, Bureau of Education of the Philippine Islands. "It is chiefly through the public schools that the percentage of illiteracy has been lowered from about 70 per cent. (in 1903) to about 30 per cent. (in 1919)."

But eloquent of results though they be in their way, statistics do not give the real measurement of the extent to which the distinctively American educational ideal had permeated the Fili-

pinos. Existing school facilities were large but nothing comparable to the needs demanded by the craving for education. Large numbers of the children of the Philippines had to be turned away from the already crowded schoolhouses. Additional teachers also were needed; to hold those already in service and attract more an increase in their salaries was demanded by the greatly rising costs of living.

With these facts before it, the Philippine legislature quickly provided the remedy. Early in 1919 it passed an act appropriating 30,000,000 pesos for the extension of general public education. This measure was designed to elaborate a more comprehensive plan so as to insure primary education to all children. Its results would be, Acting Governor-General Yeater reported to the United States Government, that in five years all children would receive education. He further reported that the effects would be the effacing of illiteracy, the establishing of English permanently as the language of the islands, and the affording of a firm foundation for democratic institutions and their stability. The measure increased the salaries of municipal teachers 30 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

An enormous increase in elementary school enrollment followed the passage of this act, and a large number of additional teachers was provided. A little more than two decades ago travelers could see in the Philippines merely a tropical enchantment—"lovely isles where the lotos blossoms and the cocoanut lifts its green-crowned head." Yet in general the luxurious splendor of vegetation was but a deceptive screen for an abounding desolation of ignorance and superstition. In perspective we see that the really historic event was not so much the hoisting of the American flag as the fixing of the constellation of ideals that went

<sup>2</sup> According to a statement published in Sept., 1924, by Manuel L. Quezon, President of the Philippine Senate, the total amount spent in the Philippines for public education before Home Rule was granted was 45,859,000 pesos; and in the seven succeeding years of autonomy 78,094,000 pesos.

with and followed the flag. The thunders of Dewey's guns ceased long, long since, but the influence of the ideals spreads with ever-increasing effulgence. In the year 1923-24 more than 1,000,000 Filipino children were enrolled in nearly 8,000 public schools; in precise figures, more than 1,112,000 of a total of about 3,000,000 children of school age were enrolled as students. The Bureau of Education says that English is now spoken more than Spanish, and that the majority of Filipinos approve English as the national language.

## CHAPTER XVII

### AUTOCRACY CHALLENGES DEMOCRACY

AFTER watching the progress of the World War in Europe for more than two and a half years and meditating upon its causes and possible consequences, the American people had formed definite conclusions as to its real significance.

When, in the summer of 1914, Germany invaded Belgium and France, the causes of the irruption seemed to be obscured by charges and counter-charges of aggression. The first feeling of the American people was one of bewilderment that a conflict embroiling many of the European nations could have happened. Americans had known, of course, that the greater part of Europe had long been an armed camp with large standing armies. But it was not seriously thought that these would ever be unleashed in a great general war.

Civilization seemed too advanced, too delicately poised, and nations too interdependent to tolerate any war threatening catastrophe. In various countries the ideal of peace had made perceptible headway. The Hague Tribunal had been established for the express purpose of settling international questions amicably. American, British, Russian and some other national historical philosophers and political economists had written books arguing away the probability of any great war. They declared that its destructiveness and its bankrupting cost would alone deter any nation from precipitating it.

German militarist and other writers at the same time produced volumes exalting force and glorifying war, but the remainder of the world little heeded those incitations. They were viewed as the outpourings of crazed egoists or rabid mili-

tarists. In other countries it was widely believed that whatever the military set said or did, there was a puissant party in Germany which could be depended upon to oppose war. This was the Socialist Party with its professed beliefs that all wars were instigated by ruling classes, especially the capitalist class, for their own benefit, and its shibboleth that workingmen of all countries should unite against their common oppressor enemy. The threat of a general strike was frequently made against any attempt to force war.

When, however, the rest of the world saw Socialists as well as all other elements of the German people fall submissively into line and support the Kaiser and the military machine, it realized that it had been deluded. Here was a people acting as a unit in what proved to be the most frightful war of aggression known in history. What influences had brought about this aim and result? To what end was this assault of German and Austrian armies and navies directed?

By 1917 the thought of the overwhelming mass of the American people had crystallized into a clear understanding of causes and sequences. Reviewing the past they recalled how often the German Emperor had declared his divine right to rule, and how in speech after speech he proclaimed the mission of Germany as that of "world-wide dominion," and himself as the divinely appointed instrument. At the time these speeches were made Americans had read them with humorous skepticism, not dreaming that the man making them would in time lead his millions of trained soldiers in the attempt to carry those ideas into effect. It was now evident that he preached and embodied the spirit of the old Holy Alliance with its hatred of democratic institutions and its designs for the extension of autocratic rule.

This was the political aspect. There were also two other aspects—the economic and the social. From ancient times the over-populated Teutonic peoples of Central Europe had periodi-



cally broken out in the effort to seize the land of other peoples. Never of a colonizing spirit, they did not try to explore the world for uninhabited lands as did Spain, England, France and Holland. In the twentieth century they were brought to a sharp realization of the fact that they had been sadly remiss in the race for colonial possessions. In their aim for spoils they sought to apply in the twentieth century the same methods of massed brute force that had characterized their incursions in the days of Marius, the Roman consul.

Socially their structure was the very antithesis of the American. Bismarck, as Chancellor, had apparently made some concessions to democracy, yet the whole scheme of government was in reality designed not to develop but to subvert individuality—to make it thoroughly subservient to the discipline of an all-powerful central administration directing every activity. The entire educational system as well as other functions were used to regiment the German people into a condition of automatic obedience. They were taught that as subjects of the Kaiser their first duty was to him. He, at the same time, insisted that he was responsible to no one but God from whom he derived his power. Under the laws any subject criticizing or reflecting upon his sacrosanct person was guilty of a crime—*lèse majesté*—and was amenable to instant punishment.

Until the war, other nations, especially America, little realized how thoroughly the doctrine of military might had been drilled into German thought. Students of German history knew that Prussia, having no natural protective barriers and surrounded by powerful and hostile kingdoms, had, in certain periods, a reason for maintaining a standing army. But in the time of Frederick the Great this doctrine of defensive need had been perverted into one of crafty aggression. Intoxicated by his success, Prussian leaders revived and modernized doctrines, the purport of which was to vaunt militarism as the crowning

achievement of a people and the chief exploit by which it reaped glory and extended its possessions and its commerce. After Germany's victory in the Franco-Prussian War, in 1871, when the King of Prussia was made the German Emperor, Prussia's rule and Prussian doctrines obtained complete ascendancy over the other German kingdoms and principalities.

Militarism was always repugnant to the American people. Although in America and in some other countries there were no illusions that civilization had entirely dispensed with resort to war, there was a devout conviction that many disputes which formerly provoked wars could be settled by arbitration. Americans also made a wide distinction between wars decreed by potentates or cabinets for some purpose of self or dynastic aggrandizement and wars which peoples themselves declared necessary. The American idea was that if peoples were to fight and suffer and die in any cause, they should have the determining say on the question of war. Over and beyond this were two other nation-wide ideas. One was that the victories of peace were far superior to those of war. The other was that if recourse had to be made to war it should be for the sake of some high principle accruing to the benefit of humanity.

The doctrine having sway in Germany, however, was that peace enfeebled a nation, causing it to degenerate, while war was vitalizing and ennobling. Nations lacking large standing armies were despised as powerless or enervated and viewed as open to spoliation. Those having large armies were regarded as imminent challengers which should be taught German invincibility by being attacked and conquered. This doctrine further held that aggression by military power was right; that military necessity was a code supreme over all other considerations, and was not bound by the sanctity of any treaty or by the restraint of any moral law. The conclusion of such a doctrine was precisely what could have been expected of an apotheosis of brute force. Ter-

rorism—or “frightfulness,” as the German leaders termed it—was declared a proper, justifiable weapon to be exercised by the military and naval machines.

As long as these doctrines seemed to be in the realm of book theory, Americans disregarded them, not believing it possible that such a cynical, materialistic, barbarous code would ever be put into practice. But when they saw this code translated into ferocious action they were startled. Treaties were brazenly violated, feeble as well as strong countries were invaded, passenger and merchant ships were ruthlessly sunk by submarines, and cities bombarded by air fleets. German spies and plotters were busy in America; German “diplomats” sought to incite Mexico against the United States. Increasingly, the American people saw that the conflict was one between two entirely different principles of both government and life. If Germany was triumphant, autocracy and force would dominate. Moreover, if it succeeded in crushing other European countries its vanity and aggressiveness would be beyond all bounds, and it would next attack the United States.

Its Emperor threatened this. In his book on “My Four Years in Germany,” Ambassador Gerard told how, on October 22, 1915, Kaiser Wilhelm had said to him, “America had better look out after this war” and “I shall stand no nonsense from America after this war.”

The German imperial government was confident that in America it had a powerful, influential lever in what were called German-American organizations. These consisted of native Germans who had come to settle in America, and who, although generally American naturalized citizens, were intrinsically German in thought, temperament and attachment. In a contest between the United States and any other country but Germany they would have supported America. And it is but a matter of justice to recall here that in the Civil War many Germans en-

listed in the Union armies and did valiant service. But in the World War the sympathies of these "German-American" organizations were wholly for the country from which they came. Impressed by their numbers and boasted power, the German imperial government believed that they could be depended upon to influence the United States into retaining a position of neutrality while Germany consummated its designs in Europe.

In reality, such organizations seemed vociferously important only when the American people were silent. Once American public opinion sternly pronounced itself, these organizations shrank into mute insignificance. So little did Germany know America and the spirit it infused that later when the sons of these very "German-Americans" went to Europe as part of our conscripted army, Germans there were surprised and grieved to find that those young men were signally American in thought, view and temperament.

There was also an attempt made by some elements to ascribe the war and its continuation to the manipulations of profiteering munitions makers. This explanation, an outgrowth of a sweeping dogma which professed to trace every human activity to economic impulses, was rejected as absurd by the American people at large. Also there were groups of American pacifists who, theoretically not believing in the principles of war, carried their convictions to the extreme of opposing all war, heedless of the aggravation.

Assembling in mass meetings throughout the country, Americans of every kind of political and religious faith passed fiery resolutions saying that the time had come when America should take action. The struggle, the resolutions said, was between autocracy and democracy, and the destiny of mankind lay in the balance. America should now declare its duty to itself, to humanity and to the future of the world.

Hitherto, from its very establishment as a nation, America



had scrupulously followed the policy of keeping aloof from European entanglements. It was now evident that its own life, welfare and principles were assailed and that its people could no longer withhold participating in this most formidable of all wars.

This is what President Wilson expressed when, in his inaugural address on March 5, 1917, he announced that Americans were no longer provincials; that the tragical events of thirty months of vital turmoil had made them citizens of the world, and there could be no turning back. As propagators of ideas, Americans had never been provincials; their ideas had permeated a large part of the world. In a political sense this was dramatically illustrated a little later—on June 23, 1917—when, after the overthrow of Czardom in Russia, the visiting Russian Commission was welcomed in Washington by the House of Representatives. “When,” said Speaker Champ Clark, “our fathers proclaimed this Republic at Philadelphia, July 4, 1776, there was only one other Republic on earth—Switzerland. . . . Now, thanks be to Almighty God, there are twenty-seven republics in the world. In a large sense we have made them, every one, not by conquering armies, not by the mailed hand, but by the wholesomeness of our example, by teaching all creation the glorious fact that men can govern themselves. . . .”

President Wilson had good reason, therefore, in reminding Americans that their principles were not those of a province or a single continent. “We have known and boasted all along,” he said, “that they are the principles of a liberated mankind.” But principles are not static things; they expand and progress according to conditions. President Wilson served notice that Americans had definite principles affecting all mankind for which they would contend in peace or fight in war. The immemorially old idea that any nation could do as it pleased regardless of the results to other nations must be discarded. All nations, he said, were equally interested in the peace of the world. All



were concerned in the political stability of free peoples, and equally responsible for their maintenance.

Here was the proclaiming of a new ideal, that of joint international responsibility and the equality of nations, irrespective of their area or gauge of armed strength. It was a demand that nations put into effect the rule of civilized life placing the weak man on the same basis of right and privilege as the strong man. That individuals should go armed in order to keep out of trouble seemed preposterous to Americans. Yet Europe had long clung to the specious claim that by arming themselves nations kept "a balance of power," and hindered one from attacking the other. The World War showed that large armaments were simply allurements to war. As long as the world allowed autocratic "war lords," there would always remain the danger of their using armaments as their ambition or schemes dictated. So that, as President Wilson said, it was to the interests of all peoples to have governments which derived their just powers from the consent of the governed. No other powers should be supported by the common thought, purpose or power of the family of nations. Furthermore, national armaments should be limited to the necessities of national order and domestic safety. These and other principles enunciated by President Wilson had far-reaching effects, some of them within a few years being transformed from the domain of pure idealism into potential actualities.

The specific reasons for a declaration of war given by President Wilson in his address to Congress, April 2, 1917, were restatements and amplifications of these principles. These, he said, had to be vindicated as against selfish and autocratic power. The address outlined the idea of a League of Nations, and declared that mankind was at the beginning of a new age. The same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrongdoing that were observed by civilized individuals should be observed among nations and their governments.

President Wilson drew a distinction between the German autocracy and the German people. The war begun by Germany, he said, was determined upon as wars used to be declared in the old unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers, and when wars were provoked or waged in the interest of dynasties or little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellowmen as pawns and tools. Only a partnership of democratic nations, he said, could maintain a steadfast concert for peace. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith or observe covenants. Such a concert must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. The intrigue of secret diplomacy would eat its vitals away. The plottings of inner circles would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples could hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.

In conclusion, President Wilson's address said: "We are glad . . . to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberties of its peoples, the German people included; for the rights of nations great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. . . .

"It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their

own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for the universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."

The resolution declaring a state of war to exist with Germany was adopted by the Senate by eighty-two affirmative votes; six Senators voted against it, and eight did not vote. In the House of Representatives there were three hundred and seventy-three votes in favor of the resolution, fifty votes against it and nine members did not vote.

Many of the members of Congress voting for war gave a concise statement of reasons why the United States had to take action. Some members had decisively expressed themselves previous to President Wilson's address and before the war resolution had been introduced.

Senator Lawrence Y. Sherman of Illinois was one of these members. In a speech in the Senate on February 7, 1917, he had replied to those who ventured to say that nobody knew why the war in Europe was waged. The reason, he said, was patent. The only militarism threatening other countries was the Prussian; there was none in other lands. He predicted that the Czar of Russia, one of the last vestiges of absolutism, would soon be overthrown—an event that shortly happened—and he declared that in nearly every nation there was an awakening of democracy. "This," he said, "is a war of democracy against absolutism; it is a war for the supremacy of the civil power over that of the military—principles for which Jefferson wrote and Washington fought. Berlin is the only one of the great civilized powers of the world where in a time of peace a military officer can drive a citizen from the walks of the capital into the gutter, and when refused the privilege can run him through with the sword, with no penalty save that of the camp, with no trial by the civil courts in time of peace. . . . They have not yet

learned this everlasting lesson of the centuries under the Kaiser's government. It is a contest of democracy against the absolutism of the king and against the rule of an unrestrained, unpunished military."

Quite true, Senator Sherman said, England had unlawfully interfered with neutral commerce, but that was capable of reparation in the course of future arbitration. "I discriminate between the confiscation of insensate merchandise, whose lifeblood is gold, and the murder of women and children whose defenseless lives can never be redeemed by the German government and for which no adequate reparation can be made." Senator Sherman told how a prominent editor of a Chicago German-language newspaper had threatened that if a break came with Germany, America would face a race war, and had intimated that Germans in Chicago would begin it. "I am not intimidated nor dismayed by such a prospect," Senator Sherman said.

When the war resolution was debated on April 4, 1917, Senator after Senator deprecated war but declared that the preservation of life at the price of dishonor would stamp Americans as an unworthy posterity of ancestors who gave them such splendid ideals.

"The world," said Senator Owen of Oklahoma, "is compelled to teach the Kaiser and his subject-soldiers the folly of trying to terrorize the world. . . . These vicious military autocratic forces who are now assailing the liberties of mankind under the grossly false pretense of protecting the German people against their supposed enemies are the same in spirit that established the Holy Alliance. . . . The house of Hohenzollern and the house of Hapsburg are known and deadly enemies to the democracies of the world, and if they succeed in overthrowing the democratic peoples of France, England, Italy and Russia, this military machine will immediately make war on us, and with their millions and millions of trained and seasoned soldiers they might devastate



America before we could organize our armies in adequate resistance."

Senator Hitchcock of Nebraska pointed out that in going to war America was the one country having nothing material to gain by victory. "We want no more territory; we demand no indemnity. We have no historic grudges to settle, and no racial antipathies to gratify. . . . We alone of all the nations will spend our treasure and sacrifice our lives without possibility of material gain. . . . We are resisting an effort to thrust mankind back to forms of government, to political codes and methods of conquest which we had hoped had disappeared forever from the world. . . . What we want most of all by this victory which we shall help to win is to secure the world's peace, broad-based on freedom and democracy, a world not controlled by a Prussian military autocracy, by Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs, but by the will of the free people of the earth."

Senator Kenyon of Iowa declared that America must free peoples from the tyranny of crowns and scepters, and that the aim of the American Republic was solely, as in the Spanish War, for the benefit of humanity and the preservation of its own ideals. "We do not," he said, "go to war in any spirit of hatred toward the German people." Senator Tillman of South Carolina said that the American people had no quarrel with the German people, "but we have a quarrel to the death with Germany autocracy."

The view of Senator Ashurst of Arizona was that liberty could not survive if it did not do more than parade in the habiliments of comfort, safety, luxury and ease. "If," he said, "we are to keep our Nation powerful for good in the affairs of men, and continue to work out the altruistic problems to which our country was dedicated, we must present to other nations an unweakened fiber, a courage both moral and physical, a mind free from trash and slush, flexed muscles and thews that have



not been debilitated or degenerated by sensuality, security or luxury. . . . If our country is to retain, as I believe she will, her historic position as the leader and noble pioneer in the vanguard of progress and human liberty, we must keep her true to the principles upon which she was founded."

The American people, Senator Myers of Montana said, now had an opportunity to secure to the rest of the struggling, panting world some of the rights which America had so long enjoyed. "We will not only be protecting our own rights but at the same time upholding the democracy of the world in waging a fight on the greatest remaining bulwark of special privilege in the world, the Prussian dynasty of Germany." Senators Colt of Rhode Island, Pittman of Nevada, Williams of Mississippi, and other Senators expressed similar sentiments.

In voting for war Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio—later elected President of the United States—was influenced more by an intensely patriotic national than an international view. He voted for war, he said, "for the maintenance of just American rights, which is the first essential to the preservation of the soul of this Republic." He went on: "Why, Senators, perhaps it has been an obsession with me, but in watching the trend of events since the outbreak of the European war and the endeavor to influence popular sentiments in this Republic, I reached a stage where I doubted if we had that unanimity of sentiment which is necessary for the preservation of this free Government. We had reached a stage where we were seemingly without a soul." Senator Harding related how eighteen years previously, America, for the first time in the history of the world, had made war in the name of humanity and had proved its good faith. Now it was again declaring war not alone for humanity's sake, but to maintain the American Republic's rights. This, he believed, would give Americans a new guarantee of nationality; it would put "a new soul into a race of American people who can enthu-

siastically call themselves truly and spiritually an abidingly American people."

The cause of Senator Harding's apprehensions was the enormous previous inpouring of immigrants from non-English speaking countries. He had seen how many Germans had remained imperviously attached to their native country, and he feared that the immigrants of other nationalities retained their local European point of view.

But, after all, what was the American nation? It was very far from comprising English stock. Composed of mingled descendants of many European countries, it had become a distinct nationality by the coördinated force of those ideals the history of which is related in this book. Freshly arrived immigrants or the older type tenaciously adhering to European ties proved to be wholly impotent against the enormously preponderant mass surcharged with the American spirit and ideals. Representative Slayden, in the House of Representatives, two months later, commented upon the national unity. "Our people," he said, "are wonderfully united and harmonious in their determination as to the war. Many of them were opposed to going into it, but after the Congress spoke, all yielded to the decision of their representatives. As a rule, and to an extent perfectly amazing, Americans of four and six generations and Americans of one generation have rallied to the support of their Government."

The speeches in the House of Representatives were generally of the same tenor as those in the Senate. They declared that despotic institutions and imperial systems were doomed; that autocracy was a menace to civilization and no longer to be endured. In the blazing light of the World War it was seen to be a deadly danger not only to its subjects but to men and women everywhere. As long as it was allowed power no peoples could be assured of safety from the perils of royal greed and unbalanced ambition. The common rights of man demanded

the downfall of that system as another necessary step in human progress.

A number of speeches in both Senate and House of Representatives expressed much more than reasons compelling America to enter the war. They held out the ideal that this was a war that might put an end to wars. "Is it too much to believe," asked Congressman Reed of West Virginia, "that the present saturnalia of war and destruction is a necessary prelude to a new harmony which is to follow? Out of it all may we hope that there will come eventually the swelling rhythm of a grand march, to which all the peoples of the earth by common impulse will step forward to a common destiny characterized by democracy, freedom and light?" "Let us," said Representative Norton, "pursue this war to a victorious conclusion, so that a lasting peace, truer happiness and contentment and greater liberty may come to all of the people of all of the nations involved."

That the American people and their representatives were in a state of intense and exalted idealism did not preclude them from taking at the same time the most practical and advanced measures for prosecuting the war successfully. It was well realized that the full power of the German autocracy had long been used with the single object of creating an efficient war machine, and that to vie with this the American Republic had, during the period of the war, to mobilize its complete manhood, financial and economic resources. Bills for these ends were introduced in Congress. The debates showed the spirit with which they were adopted.

Both Senator Thomas of Colorado and Senator Hale of Maine described how Germany's preparation for the Great War began with the formation of the Germanic Empire in 1871. "Every step," said Senator Thomas, "taken in the arts, in literature, in politics, in military and naval development, in commercial activity, was bent upon one purpose—the conscription of every

activity in the direction of military and political world supremacy." Senator Hale told how the two great ideals of the German autocracy were military and commercial supremacy. That being so, the German Government was a far more efficient form, inasmuch as all that it required was material ascendancy. It was, he said, an inhuman, soul-killing efficiency, and other peoples wanted none of it. "To cope with the amazing efficiency of an autocratic government," Senator Hale explained, "we must arm our government for the period of the war with autocratic power. We are giving the President powers that in time of peace we should never dream of giving him. During the period of the war we must make our country all-efficient."

Before and during the passage of the graduated income tax, food and fuel control, railroad administration and other bills, there was the keenest desire on the part of a majority of the members of Congress to provide legislation conscripting money as well as men. There was also an earnest aim to prevent a repetition of the shameless extortion done by profiteers in previous wars and thus far during the Great War.

"If," said Representative Ramsmeier of Iowa, on April 9, 1917, "the Nation has the right to take the lives of common men, it also has the right to take the dollars of the rich in time of war." Statistics taken by the Senate Finance Committee from "Moody's Manual," a recognized authority on business finance, and from the annual report of railway statistics of the Interstate Commerce Commission, showed that the total excess or war profits of fifty-four American corporations in the year 1916 alone amounted to \$865,631,306 above the normal or pre-war profits during the three-year period 1911-1913. This was the apparent excess; the real comparative amount, however, should have been qualified by the fact of the falling purchasing power of money.

Giving details of the great net profits made by most American industrial corporations, Representative Sisson said: "You are



asking the conscripted young man between twenty-one and thirty years of age to give the best years of his life. To popularize this war among the people it is necessary that those who have these vast incomes should make great sacrifices." Representative Dowell was applauded when he asked: "Why should we not take from the men who are making the enormous profits out of this war a large part of the sums they are receiving when these young men who are in the service are sacrificing their salaries and their lives for the great Republic?" A host of other Representatives spoke likewise. "Tax the fortune according to its earning capacity," urged Representative Miller. "Let this war," said Representative Kelly, "witness the adoption of the principle that those who have money must give it, not only for war debt, but to make their country worthy of devotion on the part of those who offer their lives in its behalf." Senator La Follette made an impassioned plea to have the war costs paid by taxation and to tax all war profits (above all normal profits) back to the Government. The excess profits tax provisions adopted by Congress were based upon this principle.

The severest denunciations of profiteers were made in the course of the debate on the bill to prevent hoarding, monopolization and manipulation of food products. During the pendency of this bill expert testimony by Herbert C. Hoover before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, on June 19, 1917, showed that in the item of flour alone in the previous five months \$250,000,000, in excess of normal profits of manufacturers and distributors, had been extorted from the American people. "We have had enough of these practices in times of peace," said Senator Thomas. "In war they constitute treason, because they give aid and comfort to the enemy." Representative Linthicum was another of many members of Congress who declared the food manipulator, speculator and hoarder to be an enemy to the



people. If, he said, the millions of young men conscripted into the army and navy or their loved ones at home should suffer because of lack of legislation regulating food production and distribution, Congress would never cease to reproach itself for such wanton neglect.

The German army general staff, it was reported, assumed that the United States could not possibly send more than 200,000 soldiers to Europe. The American regular army on April 6, 1917, was only 127,588 men; and the total of its troops, including the National Guard and the reserve corps in Federal Service, was 212,034. The total armed forces in the navy, including the Marine Corps, were 293,438.

But with extraordinary energy America, within a phenomenally short time, created huge armies, enormously expanded its navy, improvised a great new merchant marine, provided the vast requisite mechanical equipment, and made a prodigious output of munitions and other war supplies. In such a feverish speed mistakes here and there were bound to happen, but they were negligible compared to the magnitude of the total achievement.

Crowned braggarts, judging the quality of a nation by its martial clangor, had misled themselves into believing the pacific American people incapable of organizing a great fighting strength. They now had the opportunity of seeing how a mighty moral force could be quickly converted into a mighty combatant force. Under the selective service law passed by Congress, 23,700,000 men were registered and classified for assignment to army, navy or industries. Regular troops were rushed to France; but before our millions of conscripts could be sent overseas it was necessary to provide the enormous facilities required for their transportation to and in France and to build warehouses there for the supplies of our armies. In an incredibly short time large numbers of railway locomotives and freight cars and motor vehicles were

shipped to France and more than eight hundred miles of railway track was laid and twenty-three million square feet of warehouses were built in France by the American Expeditionary Force.

Our allies in Europe marveled at the immensity of these preparations and the celerity with which they were executed. A French writer, after observing them, wrote that no enemy could withstand the power of a people capable of such gigantic feats. More than 2,000,000 American soldiers were transported overseas, and an additional 1,700,000 were in camps in the United States by the early part of November, 1919. The number of American troops taking part in action against the enemy was 1,390,000. The losses in battle, including those killed, wounded and missing in action, were 240,197. From one hundred and ninety-seven warships at the beginning of the war, the navy had been increased to more than two thousand warships with a total of 575,000 armed forces.

At the same time, the United States gave much-needed financial help to its European allies. The principal of its loans to these nations amounted to nearly \$10,000,000,000. America's financing of the war was a notable success. In addition to billions of dollars requisitioned by taxation, many more billions were raised by Liberty Loan bonds and War Savings stamps, bought by all classes of Americans. The estimated value of war gifts made to the United States Government was four billion dollars.

Let us again recur to the time when monarchies held democracy to be synonymous with confusion and incompetence. To surviving believers in that falsehood the example of the American Republic in this war was another discomfiture and perhaps a final lesson. For a small centralized democracy to consolidate its full powers is not particularly difficult. America, a far-spreading democracy extending over a vast area, has manifold

governmental functions with separate and distinct powers. It has the most varied ramifications of private and corporate activities. Its people are highly individualized and cherish individuality. Yet during its part in the World War all of these agencies were welded into a unified efficiency, operating with masterly precision.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### STRENGTHENING OF MORAL FORCES

AMERICA'S preparations comprised measures as novel to war as they were to peace. The steps it now took were not suddenly developed as a hurried war plan; they had long been in experimental process or under consideration. The war merely supplied conclusive reasons for their adoption. Many members of Congress expressed the belief that America would be engaged in the war for at least three years.

Embarked as America was upon a war which required the highest possible degree of morale and efficiency, the great majority of Americans were not disposed to brook controversy over any proposal calculated to increase the national strength. Of all the components of this, America most prized morale.

The recognition of morale was nothing new in warfare's annals. But hitherto the conception had been limited to that of a mental state inducing ardor and tenacity in such causes as battling against oppression, resisting invasion and struggling for independence. To the consciousness of warring for a just and great cause America added the incorporation of new standards of morality. Thrusting aside old acceptations that certain self-indulgences were necessary either to war or peace, it also gave a new significance to personal, social and military efficiency. It raised efficiency from an effect measured by mental, physical and mechanical tests to one including moral qualifications.

During the World War the old military axiom that discipline and peril should have an offset in allowance of looseness and license still widely prevailed in European armies. In one respect, that of liquor drinking, some nations were driven by the pressing

exigencies of this war to ordering restrictions. America's policy was neither of a transient nor temporizing nature. It took the advanced position that sobriety, morality and moral hygiene were beneficial to the nation at all times and enacted those convictions.

Movements to accomplish these aims were old in America. The combination of circumstances was now considered singularly propitious to bring them to a climax.

The hard-fought object of one of these movements was the permanent outlawing of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor throughout the entire breadth of America. In one stage or another organized campaigns against liquor had been carried on in America for nearly a century. Transplanted here in settlement times the European custom of unrestrained imbibing had taken widespread hold. So epidemic was it in ensuing times that no function in either city or country was thought socially complete without its generous supply of whisky and other liquors. In the "Michigan Pioneer Collections," the Rev. R. C. Crawford, a Methodist pioneer, related how in the early part of the nineteenth century, it was customary to pass whisky at all barn-raising, corn huskings and loggings. Permits to sell hard liquors in American cities were easily procurable; even groceries were groggeries and the liquor was drunk at the counters.

The first organized temperance movement was started at Boston, in 1826, by the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance. Its aim was voluntary abstinence by moral suasion. The idea was taken up in Europe in 1829, first in Ireland, later in England and Scotland, then in Sweden. Hitherto, the use of liquors had been considered an innocent social pastime and a stimulus. The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance declared the custom a positive immorality. The introductory address of its executive committee, issued at Boston in March, 1826, deplored the extensive and desolating use of



liquors. "The number of lives annually destroyed by this vice, in our own country," its address said, "is thought to be more than 30,000; and the number of persons who are diseased, distressed and impoverished by it, to be more than 200,000." The Society reported that when it first began to preach abstinence from intoxicating liquors "this doctrine appeared to many to be strange, excited great attention, occasioned much conversation, and, through the blessing of the Lord, produced great results."

By the year 1834 more than three thousand distilleries in America ceased operations, and seven thousand merchants discontinued traffic in liquors. At about the same time the custom of serving daily rations of whisky in the army, and grog in the navy, was discontinued by the American military and naval authorities. Secretary of War Cass, in 1832, went further in issuing an order prohibiting sutlers. On fully one thousand American merchant vessels the conveying of liquor was stopped. Numerous American churches utterly refused to admit as members any persons continuing traffic in intoxicating liquors. The evangelical ministers of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Maine, the Presbytery of New York, Delaware and other States and many other religious bodies adopted resolutions declaring that vendors in liquors were violating the principles and requirements of the Christian religion. By 1834 there were in America more than seven thousand temperance societies with 1,250,000 pledged members.

"A gentleman from England writes," said the 1834 annual report of the American Temperance Society, "that this great plan of national reformation is a more glorious achievement than that which effected your political independence. It is at once far more difficult and far more honorable for a people to throw off the yoke of their vices than that of their oppressors. . . . You are reading lessons to all nations and to all coming ages. . . . The cause should go on until the United States shall be a land

without a still and without a drinker of ardent spirits. If ever you arrive at this elevation of moral greatness, your example *must* and *will* be felt in the world. Self-preservation, if nothing else, will drive other nations into an imitation of your example. In this, as in other instances, you are raised up by the Ruler of the Universe to be a model to the civilized and uncivilized world. Experiments are being carried out at this moment, upon your territory, the results of which are to be felt to the end of time."

The American Temperance Society had recommended its doctrine of voluntary abstinence from liquor as one which should commend itself to every man's conscience. This assumption presupposed the fact that men in general would readily acquiesce. Only a certain number agreed to the principle. It was the women who most strongly favored temperance. New standards came into increasing acceptance. To drink excessively and become boisterous in company ceased to be regarded with levity. In a growing number of households it was no longer deemed a fashionable mark of hospitality to offer intoxicating drinks. The custom in some parts of the country of candidates for public office supplying voters with whisky went out of usage.

To discourage liquor selling the plea was made that no American of scruples should consent, for the sake of money, to poison and destroy his fellowmen. Upon a considerable number of liquor dealers this appeal had a telling effect. But the profits made were a strong incentive leading others to continue the traffic and tempting a multitude of newcomers to go into it. More and more it was seen that no moral exhortation could cause these elements to desist, and that it was necessary to resort to the compulsion of law. Furthermore, it was pointed out with much feeling that American laws were guilty of a gross inconsistency in legalizing the liquor traffic while, at the same time,

often suppressing such lesser evils as lotteries, gambling and horse racing.

The demand for prohibition by law came from members of Congress who had been converted to the idea of abstinence. A Congressional Temperance Meeting in 1833 passed resolutions that: "The liberties and welfare of the nation are indissolubly connected with the morals and virtue of the people. And that, in the enactment of laws for the common benefit, it is equally the duty of the legislative body to guard and preserve the public morals from corruption."

This concept, that the powers of law should be used to minimize or prohibit the liquor traffic, now became the mainspring of future activities. It attracted some influential men and especially appealed to women; although temperance work was carried on by men, women in some States constituted the bulk of petition signers. The first application of remedial acts was in the enactment of strict license laws in sundry States. Then followed statutes prohibiting the manufacture, sale and keeping of intoxicating liquors, except for medical, mechanical and other specified purposes. Maine led in 1846 with such a law which, in 1851, was made more stringent. In the next few years Vermont, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New York and Indiana enacted prohibitory laws. Illinois also had a nominal prohibition law.

In general, however, such drastic laws were spasmodic and premature. Various causes militated against them. They reflected the advanced social or the emotional views of an organized few and not the well-reasoned self-preparation of the many. To a large number of voters, they smacked of coercion. That women were the most vigorous contenders for the continuation of these laws had no impressive meaning to many politicians. Women had no votes and hence were not to be reckoned with politically. On the other hand, a great influx of immigrants from liquor-

drinking European countries swarmed into the United States. To them such laws were incomprehensible. Many of these immigrants, by one means or another, were quickly converted into voters, and in sections where they were heaviest, politicians made an art of humoring them. Superadded to these conditions was the fact that the energies of reformers were increasingly drawn into the anti-slavery movement which eclipsed other issues. Having no widespread public support, laws against liquor were flagrantly violated.

The result was that prohibitory laws were repealed in all of the States, except in New York and Indiana where no repealing act was necessary; the courts there held such laws unconstitutional by reason of confiscatory provisions. Even Maine's law was abrogated in the years 1856-1857; then reënacted, and kept on the statute books. Liquor was still surreptitiously sold in Maine, but there no longer prevailed the old conditions when every grocery sold New England rum.

The more sagacious prohibitionists now realized the unwisdom of being over-sanguine. They saw that no custom, so long and so deeply fixed in social habits as was that of liquor drinking, could be overcome without a campaign of education having cumulative weight with successive generations. They saw, too, that inasmuch as social forces do not move on a straight line, individual backslidings and political recessions were to be expected for some time. In resistance also were the cohering bodies of liquor makers, dealers and sellers. The saloon was an entrenched headquarters of local political manipulation and power, and unscrupulous in the pursuit of its ends. The truth was now recognized by Prohibitionists that the legislating of a law is one thing; its enforcement another.

In 1869 the Prohibition Party was organized as a distinct political crusading party with the one eventual object of suppressing the liquor traffic. Its consistent agitation kept the



issue vital, gleaned sporadic results which, however, were attended with setbacks. In, for instance, Ohio, Iowa, Michigan and South Dakota, which at various times had laws aiming to prevent the sale of liquor, nullifying or repealing statutes were later passed. Alaska was the scene of a similar outcome; placed under prohibition by executive order of President Cleveland in 1887, Congress later allowed liquor licenses in that territory.

One of the most serious obstacles to the enactment of prohibitory laws was permanently disposed of by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1887. Kansas had taken initial action toward the elimination of the liquor traffic. Did the old court decisions still hold that seizure was unconstitutional? This was the pressing question. The great change in enlightened public sentiment was reflected by the nation's highest court. Its decision held that it was within a State's discretionary powers to protect public health, safety and morals, even by the destruction of property. Therefore the Kansas laws providing for the destruction, without compensation, of property used in connection with liquor selling, did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution. The liquor traffic was now practically adjudicated as inimical to the interests of society.

No longer having to fear hostile court decisions, advocates of prohibition saw that they need only concentrate upon procuring legislation and arousing sufficient public sentiment to support it. They visioned the approaching time when it would be considered a social disgrace to drink liquor or to be drunk; when children would not know what it was to see an inebriated man reeling on the streets or wrecking a home; when destitution and immorality, crime and insanity would be greatly reduced. They conjured up the picture of the American nation as emancipated from an evil which had accursed many peoples and many eras. Overdrawn as were many of their statements and extravagant their immediate hopes, their object, on the whole,



was seen to be one for the public good, and enlisted a growing number of adherents.

With the aim of federating all existing agencies opposing the liquor traffic, the Anti-Saloon League of America was formed in 1893. Working an interdenominational plan mainly through the churches, it created organizations in all of the States and Territories, published two score of journals, and exercised a potent influence in the field of agitation, legislation and law enforcement. Including North Dakota, which had retained prohibition since 1890, there were only a few commonwealths having State-wide prohibition laws, but there were many localities barring liquor by means of local option laws.

It was in this period that America began its prohibitory movement against narcotics.

Soon after the United States acquired the Philippines its officials there found that considerable numbers of the people of those islands were victims of the destructive vice of opium smoking. The United States Government sought ways of preventing the traffic in opium, and it was primarily at its request that an International Opium Commission, composed of representatives of the leading world powers, was called to devise measures for the possible stoppage of this international traffic. Following the first Commission came a series of similar Commissions. The United States found, however, it was itself not beyond reproach by its permitting the importation of opium for smoking. In the preceding fifty years the United States Government had actually collected about \$27,000,000 in revenue upon importations of opium.

When this fact was brought to the attention of Congress it enacted the law of February, 1909, absolutely forbidding the importation in the United States or its territories of narcotics except for medicinal purposes. In the ensuing years it was found, however, that the intent of this legislation was partly

nullified by the provisions, still in force, of the tariff act of 1890. This allowed opium for smoking to be manufactured in the United States upon payment of a comparatively small tax and the giving of a small bond. It was also found that the importation of narcotics was far in excess of legitimate medicinal needs. A report of June 24, 1913, from the House Committee on Ways and Means showed that a wide canvass of the medical profession had determined that between 50,000 and 75,000 pounds of opium and 15,000 ounces of cocaine were yearly sufficient to supply medical needs, yet the United States annually imported and consumed more than 400,000 pounds of opium and more than 150,000 ounces of cocaine.

At the instance of Representative Francis Burton Harrison of New York, Congress thereupon passed a bill, which became law June 17, 1914, making the tax and bond prohibitive and increasing the penalties for violations. By later legislation the Federal Narcotics Control Board was established, and it was made unlawful to import or bring any narcotic drug into the United States or any territory under its jurisdiction except in such amounts as this Board found necessary for medical and other legitimate purposes. The nature of narcotics lends itself to devious smuggling, but the United States officials are ingeniously alert to discover hidden sources, and confiscations have been numerous.

In the effort to control and curtail the international traffic, the United States remains in the lead. Most of the European colonies in the Far East sanction the opium trade under direct Government control for reasons of expediency or profit. The problem of effectively reducing the production of narcotics and the trade in them is a complex one in Asiatic countries. Nevertheless, America insists that there is only one practicable standard of benefit to all races, and that is to restrict production of these

drugs and traffic in them to the world's medical and scientific necessities.

At the International Opium Conference at Geneva, in November, 1924, the American delegates submitted this proposal. It follows the principle underlying American legislation upon the subject, and is one remedy promising tangible results. Roumania, Egypt, Ireland and the Dominican Republic all expressed themselves in favor of this plan. A proposal made by Bishop Brent of the American delegation was highly commended in a speech made before the Conference by Alfred Sze, China's Minister to the United States. China's Government in 1906 had ordered the suppression of opium production but because of disturbed internal conditions in China it had been resumed. There is now a National Anti-Opium Association in China having 1,300 organizations and 2,000,000 members, and agitation is being carried on for the final suppression of both the production and the traffic. Bishop Brent's proposal was that nations deriving profit from the sale of opium to smoking addicts should expend this revenue for the unfortunates from whom the profits were obtained. Reasons of expediency have thus far influenced a number of the nations concerned from supporting the American plan of restricting opium production to medical and scientific needs, but there seems ground for hoping that this proposal will eventually prevail.

Beginning in 1907, to the astonishment of the rest of the country, the great impetus to prohibition of liquor came from the Southern States. This was a section where for centuries the custom of hospitable conviviality had been accepted as a bounden household and social ceremony and a business requisite. Abandoning those ideas, one Southern State after another, deciding that the interdiction of liquor was an essential moral and economic reform, passed prohibitory laws.

The movement spread rapidly, so that by the end of the year

1916, twenty-three of the forty-eight States had prohibitory laws, and four more, by legislative enactment, were soon to be added.

A petition, containing more than eight million names, was sent to Congress asking it to submit to the States an amendment to the Federal Constitution prohibiting the manufacture, sale or use of intoxicating liquor. The advocates of national prohibition insisted that no one must be allowed to poison the nation for profit; that the liquor traffic was a hideous danger to society, therefore society should suppress it. "We must make mankind a thoroughbred race," declared Captain R. P. Hobson, one of the leaders. It was pointed out that the Russian government two years previously had prohibited vodka; that in England and some other European countries restrictive measures were now in force.

The judiciary committee of both houses of Congress reported favorably upon the Constitutional amendment. Resolutions came early in 1917 from the legislatures of Utah, Nebraska and other bodies urging its passage. After the United States entered the war, more State legislatures and many religious, fraternal and other bodies sent resolutions to Congress requesting the introduction at once of national prohibition as a war measure. In addition to its other baneful effects, the resolutions said, the liquor traffic was a burden economically and industrially. It was withdrawing from legitimate lines of industry and commerce more than two billion dollars annually, and was additionally using enormous quantities of fuel, foodstuffs and other useful commodities needed by America to prosecute the war successfully.

Congress passed the amendment; by 1919 it was ratified by three-fourths of the States. It became incorporated in the Federal Constitution, and its constitutionality was upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States. To the extent that



supreme law could apply, liquor was now completely inhibited. An aftermath remained in the surreptitious making, importing and consuming of liquor. In order to enlarge its powers of suppressing the smuggling of liquor by sea, the United States Government recently induced a number of other governments to sign treaties extending America's jurisdiction, in matters pertaining to liquor, from the former three miles from shore to a twelve-mile limit. The problem, apparently one of enforcement of law, is, in the larger aspects, one to be overcome only by ascending standards of moral responsibility.

After various preparatory stages America also effected during the war another moral reform of incalculable value to society. It was that of social hygiene applied to armies. The movement accomplishing this had been preceded by moral campaigns influencing persons and communities to reject the ancient dictum that prostitution was an immutable social evil.

At basis, the Puritan settlers of Massachusetts had the very idea which today is increasingly impelling the conduct of enlightened peoples. In every way they sought—although sometimes mistakenly and often too rigorously—to inculcate personal and general upright living. A scrutiny of their laws shows act after act against corrupt conduct and the debauching of youth. By the most unrelenting vigilance their officials aimed to regulate and uphold purity of conduct. But their only notion of doing this was by pressure of summary laws, dictated by theologians. Except in the severe orthodox religious sense, they made no moral educational appeal to the individual. Their intense system of repression frequently had the opposite effect. Prostitution was not absent, yet it was not accepted as a regular feature of social life as it was in Europe.

In time, however, this transplanted idea became widely established in America. British royal governors and other officials viewed prostitution as a customary institution sanctioned by



the unbroken usage of ages. As an habitual adjunct of armies no question was raised about it. There was not lacking the knowledge of the appalling resultant diseases; ghastly epidemics had ravaged Europe. But the institution was thought unavoidable and impregnable. Moreover, to discuss the subject was socially codified as an unpardonably gross infringement of good manners; to write about it, a heinous violation of public proprieties.

Commonly it is supposed that the movement in America against this evil came in recent decades only. True as this is of the effects, it is not true applied to the fight against causes. In point of fact, there was a noteworthy revolt of American women in the period from 1830 to 1839. The Female Moral Reform Society of New York City and similar societies in many other American cities were then organized. Under the auspices of the Female Reform Society, a journal, *The Advocate of Moral Reform*, was published in New York City. The issue of that paper of June 1, 1837, showed that two hundred auxiliary bodies were connected with the Female Moral Reform Society, and that about fifteen thousand ladies were "all pledged to the great principles of Moral Reform."

The *Advocate of Moral Reform* denounced "the sickly sentimentality which for reasons of supposed delicacy ignores ugly facts." An article in this publication, April 15, 1837, estimated, as the result of an investigation, that the number of "notoriously abandoned females" in American cities was at least 150,000.

The women reformers of that period believed that wholly social causes induced prostitution; they did not understand that economic factors also had their propelling influence. The remedies proposed, therefore, by those societies followed lines of social endeavor.

One plan was to use every effort to exclude indecent literature

such as corrupting novels, loose poetry and suggestive plays. Denounced then as prudery, this aim has become today one of the main pillars of the social purity movement with its injunctions embodied in American law and in teaching. When the *Advocate of Moral Reform* denounced writings which "corrupt the taste, seduce the heart through the senses and pollute it through the medium of imagination which they have made wild, restless and uncontrollable," its purpose was to breed wholesomeness of mind. And that is precisely our clear modern conception; social purity begins in the mental state.

The accompanying plan proposed by those societies was to ostracize seducers. An ineffectual, fantastic remedy, it was derided by some opponents. But it had more of an ultimate social value than even those reformers thought. For it was the beginning of a new social criterion demanding an equal standard of morality for both sexes and protesting against the condemnation of the one while exculpating the transgressions of the other. "Now the seduced is shunned and the seducer is cherished. This must be reversed, for in nine cases out of ten, the seducer is the first at fault." So declared the *Advocate of Moral Reform*. According to their pledge, the women of these moral societies were not to associate with or patronize any known licentious person of either sex.

Meanwhile the only remedy thought of in Europe was that of regulation of public prostitutes by licensing and registration. These abhorrent European continental laws conferred legal sanction upon the barbarous trade in women and legalized centers of vice. Ostensibly to promote the health of the army in military districts, the British Parliament, in 1864, supplemented by further legislation in 1866 and 1869, adopted this system. It took twenty years of agitation on the part of British moral reformers to bring about the repeal of those laws.

The great moral movements in America before the Civil War,

as we have already said, were absorbed in the predominating movement to abolish chattel slavery.

With but one exception—and that the result of a legislative trick—no American city was subjected to any legalization of vice. The exception was St. Louis. The interpolation of two words in the act caused the introduction of the license system there in 1870. The repeal of this law was demanded of the Missouri legislature in a petition signed by four thousand women of St. Louis; by the prelates and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church; by nearly all of the Protestant clergy; and by the majority of St. Louis lawyers and physicians. It was repealed in 1874. Segregated districts long remained in American cities; they were but tolerated and endured, having no sanction in law.

Social purity movements now were organized in Great Britain, America and in other countries to elevate public opinion regarding morality and to advocate a single standard of morality for both sexes. The educational literature of these bodies had a slow but convincingly permeating influence. The old claim that prostitution was "a necessary evil" was shown to be a superstition, dependent upon a demand which arose from a traditionally artificial social point of view. In 1904 thirteen nations signed a treaty for the suppression of the international white slave traffic. Following lines developed somewhat earlier in England, various social hygiene societies were organized in America to spread sex educational propaganda. These societies were joined in 1910 in the American Federation for Sex Hygiene. In the same year the United States Congress enacted the Mann law aimed at the practice of importing and the interstate transporting of women for immoral purposes. Representative Cox of Indiana voiced the idea of the pushers of that measure when he said that the strength of America did not lie in its army or navy, but "in the building up of a strong,

healthy sentiment of morality, having in view high ideals of life."

The period from 1912 to 1917 saw the widespread disappearance in America of segregated or "red-light" districts, one city after another abolishing them.

With the United States a participant in the World War, American social hygiene and other organizations urged Congress to take drastic action for the prevention of prostitution in army camps. The preliminary brief of the Oregon Social Hygiene Society, for example, gave a list of compelling reasons why this action should be taken. It showed that in the first eighteen months of the World War, more soldiers of one of the great European powers were incapacitated by venereal diseases contracted in mobilization camps than by all of the fighting on the battle line. It showed that the havoc wrought by such diseases in the German army had greatly increased since the war's outbreak. It cited from a Vienna report that because of these diseases a total equivalent of sixty divisions had been temporarily withdrawn from the front. Also it cited facts from French and Italian reports showing the great increase of these diseases in France and Italy during the war. It quoted Sir Conan Doyle on women preying upon soldiers in London, and gave facts as to occurrences among American soldiers when previously occupying the Mexican border. The resolutions, on May 5, 1917, of the Association of American Colleges, at Washington, D. C., requested Congress to adopt more effective measures to eliminate prostitution within adequate zones of every army camp; encourage social, athletic and other recreational exercises; and establish a permanent educational program.

These recommendations were adopted; Congress gave full authorization. Both Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, and Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, announced that nothing would be left undone to protect our young men in service



from bad and unhealthy influences. The War and the Navy Departments established commissions on Training Camp Activities which coöperated with the Public Health Service and with other government functions. Congress established an Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board to correlate the work of various departments. In wide zones around training camps liquor and prostitution were suppressed. Athletics, books, music and dances were provided. By means of pictures, exhibits, stereopticon slides and motion pictures the soldier was taught the fearful perils of a loose life and the benefits of continence. Nor did the American Government stop with these measures. Congress created a special division in the Public Health Service to carry on a continuous educational campaign among the population at large. It appropriated millions of dollars for this purpose as well as to assist the corresponding work of the various State Boards of Health.

"The war," said a pamphlet issued by the American Social Hygiene Association, "gave a mighty forward shove to the social hygiene movement. Under the pressure of necessity, great advances were made, and public opinion followed close behind. Men and women displayed a surprising willingness to handle without gloves a subject formerly considered unmentionable. . . . But peace must carry on with greater intensity a work which calls for a redoubling of effort on the part of the public. . . . From the great mass of evidence at hand it seems certain that the United States will assume a place of leadership among nations in the war for national health." This pamphlet predicted the approaching time when every community would have learned the necessity and value of moral cleanliness.

During and immediately after the war the long-pending movement for an amendment to the Federal Constitution granting the right of suffrage to women came to a successful termination.

The subject of woman's political rights was, it seems, broached



by some leading American women during the Revolution. Abigail Adams, the wife of John Adams, was one of these. The conception of woman's rights was then, however, a suffrage limited to the better-placed women, corresponding to that confining votes to men owning real estate.

A little later, in England, Mary Wollstonecraft in her writings argued for woman's political emancipation. When her disciple, Frances E. Wright, came to America in 1829 to give a series of lectures, she preached the right of women to participate in public affairs and to go into professions. But attacking religion, the clergy, marriage and other institutions as she did, her doctrines aroused vehement antagonism, not the least among American women themselves. Essentially the aim of the few early British advocates of woman suffrage was aristocratic. They had no real grasp of a democratic suffrage, for America was just then introducing unqualified manhood suffrage. Moreover, the end sought in England was authority for its own sake, an authority co-equal with that of men. A motion in the House of Commons in 1833 to allow suffrage to women "was cruelly and indecorously laughed down."

The motive of American women suffrage pioneers was entirely different. Organized as many American women were in moral, educational and other reform movements, they craved the right to vote for its use in the accomplishment of some public good. In August, 1834, an article in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, referring to the numerous societies in which American women took a prominent part, told how many ladies were expressing the hope that they would ere long be allowed the voting privilege. Susan B. Anthony wrote that it was the realization of their political powerlessness in their efforts against liquor and slavery that drove a number of women, including herself, into a life-long, undaunted agitation for woman suffrage.

Once this movement took organized shape it went beyond

the demand for the voting right. It called for a radical change in woman's civil status itself. American manhood had rightly and successfully objected to laws restricting political rights to the propertied classes exclusively. Now American womanhood began to rebel against outworn laws founded upon an antiquated assumption of woman's inferiority and incapability. Explicit and sharp were the resolutions adopted by the Woman's Rights Convention held at Waterloo, New York, in July, 1848. Woman, they said, was compelled to submit to laws in the formation of which she had no voice. The law denied a married woman the right to possess property or even retain the wages she earned. Single or married, she was taxed to support a government in which she had no selective part. All of the colleges were closed against her. In the church she was allowed a subordinate position only. Man monopolized nearly all of the profitable employments. In such minor occupations as woman was permitted to follow she received but scanty pay.

So ran the resolutions. Perhaps their embittered tone and sweeping tenor were thought justified by the need of making a vivid impression upon the public mind. Nevertheless they contained a partial error, and their arbitrary indictment of all men as responsible for these conditions was both untrue and a serious strategic blunder.

In its August, 1834, number the *Knickerbocker Magazine* had cited various American colleges which began to admit women. As for laws disqualifying women they, like other enactments weighing upon the generality of men, originated in the Old World, and were transplanted with English common law. Propertyless men had but recently obtained in America the very suffrage right for which advanced women were now contending. Instead of appealing to the mass of men to share with women the right that they themselves had secured after a long struggle,

the organized women suffragists gave their movement the distinct color of a war between the sexes.

No course of action could have more effectively repelled large numbers of men. American men resented being portrayed as oppressors, and above all, of women.

In a previous chapter we have quoted European testimony as to the remarkable chivalry of American men of all classes. No false chivalry was this, but one of enormous respect and consideration. Neither did American manhood look upon woman as an ornament, but as a true helpmate. To her he was more than willing to award the direction of moral forces and social activities. But (and this was the prevalent view) he was strongly averse to imposing upon her responsibilities for which he held himself solely accountable. Many men were prepared to concede that by right women should have suffrage. Yet they did not relish the prospect of injecting her into politics which was then often a rough arena. American men in general prided themselves that in their attending wholly to the business of providing for the household, they spared the women financial anxieties and the burden of outside labor. In such occupations as women could extend the influence of their refinement and morality, men were glad enough to accord them full opportunities. For instance, in teaching in the public schools. Many women were already employed in factories; neither this condition nor their low wages were the result of the desire of men but despite their opposition. Men factory operatives were, in an economic sense, the sufferers because their own wages were kept down or they were thrown out of employment by reason of the increase of women workers.

Allied with the demand for women suffrage was a campaign for the enlargement of woman's social prerogatives. By what just rule were women prevented from going out alone if they chose? This is what many American women pointedly asked. No

statutory law existed to bar the practice; it was decreed by social canons borrowed from Old World customs. New industrial conditions had already broken down these restrictions among women having to work in factories. But old customs still persisted among the punctiliously genteel classes.

Thus, an editorial on "The Unprotected Female" in the January, 1853, number of *Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book* gravely commented: "It now and then chances that ladies are obliged to travel alone, or without a gentleman escort, and we know that to many it has been a frightful undertaking. But it seems to us perfectly proper, so that a lady conducts herself with all due reserve and decorum; and especially in our own country, there are very few 'lions in the way.'" . . .

In 1850 there was published at Philadelphia a book on "Woman in America: Her Work and Her Reward," by Maria J. McIntosh. Politically, she wrote, Americans had fulfilled their duty nobly. But far different was the state of their social life, in which "we have been servile imitators, the apes of every folly, and apologists of every vice to which Europe has given a sanction." Was not this, she asked, ascribable to the women who presided over American social life? Was it not due to their not understanding American conceptions nor the future to which these were tending? European castes and fripperies, she urged, were out of place in America, the free, independent spirit of which should be reflected in its social life. "Is there not for us a work to do, a destiny to accomplish?" her book went on. "May not we, the women of America, mold our social life by our intelligent convictions into a form which shall make it the fit handmaid of our political life in its grand simplicity and lofty aims?" These ends were defined as a life of earnest purpose, of noble aim—a life of self-sacrifice for the assertion of great principles, with which the advancement of the human race was indissolubly connected.



To a notable degree this ideal has since increasingly dominated the social life of the American woman. Excepting the relatively small groups of superficial types of women, the personal and social activities of American women have been displayed in a myriad of movements of a social, religious, philanthropic, educational and industrial character.

The aid given by women's organizations during the Civil War was of inestimable value. When, in 1869, two new American associations for woman suffrage were organized, their demand was based purely upon the merits of the question. With denunciation of men omitted, their cause now had an unprejudiced argumentative opportunity. The two associations were fused into the National American Woman Suffrage Association. In Western communities men were more responsive to the appeal to grant woman suffrage, and apathetic in the conservative Eastern States. Furthermore, the spectacular opposition to the innovation came not so much from men as from coteries of women organized in associations opposed to the extension of suffrage to women. Their claim was that woman should retain her supreme sway in the home realm, and that to drag her into the vortex of politics was unsuitable to her as a sex and would weaken her influence. As the years passed both the men and women foes of woman suffrage made the additional argument that civil law had been so far altered that in provision and administration it tended to favor the wife unduly while often discriminating against the husband. These and other representations had their effect in delaying but not preventing a gradually forward course of suffrage legislation.

It was in 1869 that the Territory of Wyoming led in enfranchising women. By legislative enactment in 1887 Kansas women were empowered to vote in municipal elections. Colorado, in 1893, by an enactment ratified by a large majority of men voters, gave women the right to vote. The very first bill



introduced by a Colorado woman legislator was one raising the age of consent, in which aim she was partially successful. As a Territory, Utah, as early as 1870, had enfranchised women, but this act had been nullified by a bill passed by Congress intended to discourage the Mormon institution of polygamy. After it became a State, Utah gave women the full franchise. Idaho, in 1896, did the same. In many States women were granted the partial right to vote. By stages the voting right was extended so that by 1918 women had the full ballot in twelve States.

In the meantime various foreign countries or divisions of countries had granted woman suffrage. They were: Isle of Man, 1881; New Zealand, 1893; Australia, 1902; Finland, 1906; Norway, 1907; Iceland, 1913; Denmark, 1915; Russia, 1917. Canada, Austria, England, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Poland, Scotland and Wales granted woman suffrage in 1918. Holland and Sweden followed in 1919.

In the forty years that had elapsed since women first asked Congress to adopt and submit a suffrage amendment to the Constitution vast changes in woman's social, professional and industrial status had taken place. The principle of the equality of the sexes became an acceptance. The World War revealed to all Americans in a new and most impressive way the manifold capacities in which women served their country. The time was now ripe for final action. In 1919 Congress proposed, and by 1920 three-fourths of the States had ratified an amendment to the Constitution giving nation-wide suffrage to women.

## CHAPTER XIX

### COMPACT TO SUPPRESS WAR

READ in the cold light of history the plaudits bestowed upon America for its part in the World War will perhaps savor of the extravagant. It was but natural that the joy of hard-pressed nations over America's help should find outlet in ecstatic terms. Although gratified by these enthusiastic praises, Americans did not lose their perspective. They were well aware that far greater sacrifices had been made by France, Belgium and Britain in year after year resisting Germany's titanic onslaught.

Sifting the mass of encomiums, however, there remained certain tributes in which America could take just pride as being exclusive to itself. Also, there were certain assertions which, though well meant, still showed how dimly understood in some other countries were the influences making the American character and aims.

Of the group of utterances which did not overstep the bounds of strict truth, the comment of the London *Spectator* was typical. It said that when America did act "it was with a self-abandonment and unselfishness and generosity to which the history of international relations affords no parallel. America threw herself into the contest without a thought of what she was to gain as a nation." Americans knew this to be undeniably so. Marshall Joffre, at the French Academy in Paris, on December 19, 1918, expressed, on the other hand, only part of a total truth when he said of America that, "History does not record a more marvelous achievement than that of millions of men voluntarily breaking away from their peaceful pursuits to cross

the seas and give up their lives for a noble cause, a great ideal." The full truth embodied an historic phenomenon to which Americans were so accustomed that they did not think of it as a phenomenon. America (to repeat) is preëminently the land of individuality. The millions of its soldiers were pronounced individualists. For the sake of an idea they suspended their individuality and merged themselves into the all-absorbing mechanism of the national army.

Other nations, for the first time, now gave recognition to the existence of such a thing as American idealism. Foreign statesmen, editors, generals, professors spoke or wrote about it. Apparently it seemed to be a sudden discovery, and the eulogy of it was often strangely mixed with surprise that a nation so addicted to money-gathering as America had long been represented could reveal so high a quality of idealism.

Wherefore this purblindness? Was it not, by reason of adhering to a conventionally one-sided history, they failed to read the new history aright? Because in explorations and conquests and in the arts and sciences Europe had diffused its type of civilization in new lands, they saw history as measured by European influences only. Never had they thought of reversing the picture and seeing the effect of America's influence upon Europe and other continents. That influence was in the realm of accomplished ideas. One after another had gone over the world. Everywhere, as we have seen, they had changed conceptions of government and its relation to mankind. They had proclaimed the rights and aspirations of individuals and of humanity. Could an alleged grasping people have done these things? Self-evidently and emphatically not; the question is a fair test.

The very war Europe was so terrifically fighting was largely the result of the impact of American ideas; the very peace it was about to sign followed the same lines. European peoples fighting for independence and self-expression held up America as their

model. The Declaration of Independence of the Czecho-Slovak Nation, October 18, 1918, said: "We accept the American principles as laid down by President Wilson; the principles of liberated mankind, of the actual equality of nations, and of governments deriving all their just power from the consent of the governed. We, the nation of Comenius, cannot but accept these principles expressed in the American Declaration of Independence, the principles of Lincoln, and of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen."

American idealism, then, has been a most potent, far-reaching tangibility. Yet to many Americans, affected by its suffusive influence but unmindful of it as an historic fact, the subject has seemed impalpable, blending into the unreal. Could foreign commentators be censured for believing the American people sunk in money-grubbing when some high-placed Americans themselves were inclined to think so? So often had they heard the charge repeated that they had perfunctorily come to accept it. On the evening of December 15, 1918, Thomas R. Marshall, Vice President of the United States, thus relieved himself in a speech at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York City: "I am frank to confess that I was among the number who before this war had wondered whether the American people had lost their immortal soul in materialism. Thank God, I know that the American people did not lose their immortal soul. I know that here and there you can point to a profiteer in the contracts that have been made with this Government . . . but look at the record of this people and answer me if, when the hour of need came, every grade and every condition, from highest to lowest, from richest to poorest, from wisest to most ignorant, did not rise up to defend the immortal soul of America?"

In the multitude of foreign eulogies of America there were two other notable misconceptions. Astounded by the vigor of the American people, European analysts busied themselves find-

ing a likely explanation. It was, the *Politiken* of Copenhagen asseverated with authoritative air, because "the American nation is an extract of European youth which, melted together in some generations, has produced a race of incomparable health." The *Politiken* went on to explain further that there had been transplanted to America the British world outlook, the German power of organization, the Gallic logic, the Slavic imagination, Scandinavian broad-mindedness.

Here we have another superfine example of a European attempt to decipher an apparent mystery by applying measurements of European influences. Not a word of the purely American ideas and institutions, political, educational, moral, humanitarian, artistic, and ethical, which, in due course, had transmuted tens of millions of immigrants into a homogeneous people with a distinctive nationality. Indeed, one of the leading aims of Congress in passing the law containing America's new restrictive immigration policy was to maintain American standards. By basing the quota of admittances upon the races that originally populated America, it gave the preference to European groups of immigrants which experience, it was believed, had shown were best adapted to adjust themselves to American institutions. It was assumed that northwestern Europeans had shown a better capacity for this than southeastern Europeans.

Americans were alarmed at the great change in the composition of immigration. In former decades the influx was almost wholly from northern and western Europe. During the period from 1897 to 1914, the ratio greatly changed, about three millions coming from that part of Europe and more than ten millions from southern and eastern Europe and from countries near Asia. Americans viewed with great concern this inrush of peoples of mixed races having traditions, customs, political ways and standards of living markedly different from the settled characteristics of the American people. To the solicitous American



the sight of these great foreign groups having their own language newspapers and retaining their European antagonisms was especially disquieting during the first years of the World War.

The wisdom of America's new selective immigration policy, guarded by various restrictions, is undoubtedly sustained by a number of most excellent reasons. Some are economic, some political and others social. On the economic side, America is no longer an unsettled country having an abundance of free land. In recent decades the greatest part of immigration has congested in the cities. With successive improvements in machinery, particularly automatic machinery, the demand for unskilled labor has proportionately lessened. In addition, American labor, through many a trial and sacrifice, built for itself standards of working conditions and living which it does not purpose to have undermined.

But so far as the question of racial superiority or inferiority is concerned, we, sticking to historical truth, must note that much the same objections were brought against immigrants from northwestern Europe in former times.

In an earlier chapter we have told how some of the Tory Americans of Revolutionary times regarded immigrants of that era as "the offscourings of Europe." Then and in the first decades of the nineteenth century immigration was mainly poor English, Scotch and Irish. Most of them had trades.<sup>1</sup> Yet because they—or many of them—landed in a penniless condition they were branded by some Americans as "foreign paupers." The legislature of Maine, on April 15, 1837, asked Congress to pass a law against "the introduction or importation of foreign paupers and criminals" because the result "imposes unreason-

<sup>1</sup> The report of Secretary of State Edward Livingston, February 21, 1833 (Doc. No. 119, House of Representatives, Twenty-second Cong., Second Session), showed that the bulk of immigrants were British and were composed of farmers, weavers, spinners, cabinetmakers, shoemakers, watchmakers, laborers, etc. There was a small infiltration of immigration from Germany, France and some other countries.

able taxes upon the citizens, corrupts the public morals and endangers the public safety." The Massachusetts legislature, April 18, 1836, sent a memorial to Congress against "British paupers and criminals." The memorial spoke of "the immense, insupportable and by us almost inconceivable burden of pauperism in England," and how they rushed to America to take advantage "of the comfortable provision here made for the poor and our open philanthropy and freedom in giving strangers a hearty welcome to our shores."

Less than two years later—in January, 1838—Congress received a voluminous memorial signed by nine hundred members of the Native American Association protesting that immigrants coming from monarchical nations could not easily assimilate themselves to a republican country. The memorial thus described the immigrant:

"Worn out by the oppressions he has endured, or by the toils he has undergone in his native country, or impelled by his wandering propensities, he abandons his native home to seek a new one here, with all of his foreign habits, prejudices and predilections 'lumbring' at his back. Can it be believed that he can disburden himself so completely of these and have so learned to fulfill the duties of a citizen of the United States in the very short period of five years, as to be qualified to exercise all the political privileges of one?" The memorial further protested against "the manifest injustice of dividing with foreign adventurers and exiles the dearest privileges of the native citizens of the United States and thereby divesting them of a portion of their natural rights." The Native American memorial stated further objections: "They fear that the rapid and extraordinary increase of the foreign population and the facility with which that population acquire the rights of citizenship will, ere long, expose the institutions of the country to serious dangers." Some ambitious and unscrupulous leader might arise to use those

foreigners "as the instruments of the overthrow of this now happy and envied Republic."

Those inclined to depreciate America's capacity to assimilate immigration may with edification consult the ominous views embodied in Senate Miscellaneous Doc. No. 12, 1835; House Doc. No. 219, 1836; House Doc. No. 98, 1838, and other documents. They may peer into *De Bow's Magazine*, which, when the great tide of immigration from Ireland and Germany set in, said in February, 1848: "It is for republican institutions that we fear most." But the constructive American wasted no time in idle declamation or in ranting against the misfit character of the immigrant. We have already shown in the chapters on education how the American people, as a whole, energetically carried on the process of replacing European with American characteristics. We shall quote again, this time from the 1854 annual report of the New York City Board of Education (and that was the city which was the great point of debarkation for most of the immigrants): ". . . A duty is then laid upon us to do what we can to fit them for the brotherhood to which we invite and admit them, and this spirit has led the Legislature, in the year 1848, to authorize this Board to establish and organize evening schools . . . which are open to all and are the right of all without any distinction of race or religion or national character."

Having made this digression to show the transforming effect of America's institutions we shall now proceed.

To revert to the second misconception of America during the World War: Somehow other nations seemed to think that America was using all of its material resources and its great spirit in the cause of war with the aim only of winning the war. An error of the first magnitude. It was for the cause of peace as an ultimate that America was fighting. Autocracy and dominating governing classes threw upon force and selfish aggression.

Mankind's chronicles were hideously tragic with their plottings, crimes and wars. The time had come to exterminate the hoary practice of the mighty pouncing upon the weak. To bring about the advent of this new era new principles and ways were necessary in the affairs of mankind. Autocracy was fighting for the wide enthronement of the old methods. Therefore, peace and democracy could be assured only by autocracy's utter defeat.

In a succession of addresses President Wilson enunciated American ideas of the great struggle and America's outgrowing purposes as he interpreted them.

The past and the present were in mortal grapple. On the one side were "governments which fear their people, and yet are for the time their sovereign lords, making every choice for them and disposing of their lives and fortunes as they will, as well as the lives of every people who fall under their power." These governments were "clothed with the strange trappings and primitive authority of an age that is altogether alien and hostile to our own."

Associated on the other side were peoples fighting for definite ideas of freedom. What were America's ideas? The destruction or reduction to virtual impotence of any arbitrary power that could disturb the peace of the world. The annihilation of the old covert, scheming diplomacy which settled every question upon the basis of material interest, advantage and mastery; thereafter all territorial and other questions would have to be adjusted by free acceptance of the peoples concerned. The relation of nation to nation to be governed by the same principles of honor and respect for the common law of civilized society that governed individuals of modern states in their relation to one another. Mutual trust should supplant the old criminal methods of kings with their violation of promises and treaties, and their hatching of plots and conspiracies. There should be established an organization of peace. This should



make it certain "that the combined power of free nations will check every invasion of right and serve to make peace and justice the more secure by affording a definite tribunal of opinion to which all must submit and by which every international readjustment that cannot be amicably agreed upon by the peoples directly concerned shall be sanctioned."

President Wilson affirmed that small and weak peoples had as much right to their sovereignty and independence as large and strong countries. They had, he insisted, the right to determine their own institutions and be guaranteed by the other peoples of the world protection against marauding aggression. Not confining his definitions to political liberties, he applied the same principles to a right which hitherto had never been formulated by the head of any country. This was economic rights. The underlying influence of economic factors in producing wars or contributing to them had from remote eras been an acute mainspring. But until recent times the historian ignored economic aspects; only incidentally was there any reference to conditions upon which the food supply, raw materials, the trade, the very material subsistence of peoples depended. The old, long-prevailing method had been that of strong rulers and ruling classes seizing economic advantages by pillage of war. The American ideal of economic opportunities for all was expressed by President Wilson when he declared that small and weak nations were entitled as an act of elemental justice to participate equally with the powerful in the world's economic opportunities.

In his Fourteen Points defined in his message to Congress on January 8, 1918, President Wilson stated clearly certain principles upon which peace would be conditioned. These included open covenants of peace; freedom of the seas in peace and war; equality of trade conditions; reduction of armaments; adjustment of colonial claims with reference to the wishes of the governed population; evacuation of invaded territory; auton-



omous development for the peoples of Austria-Hungary, and independence for Roumania, Serbia and Montenegro; relinquishment of Turkish control over non-Turkish populations; the erection of an independent Polish State; and a League of Nations to guarantee independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike.

This, President Wilson declared, was the war of wars. In terse phrase he aptly put the thought and aspirations of the American people. America went to war to make its liberties safe, to give liberty to other peoples, and decisively—as far as human effort and foresight could plan—it warred to end war. Two of these purposes embodied the present; the other sought to guard the future. Combined, they made an aim which sublimated almost the entire American people. Unquestionably there was a widespread hope in America that this war might mean the cessation of wars. The very feeling that they were fighting for present peoples as well as the security from war of future generations elevated the American spirit to one of high exaltation. There pervaded a glorious dream of mankind dwelling in perennial amity.

Now to judge the real nature of this dream we should recall that it came after an age during which certain expositors of science had filled the world with their productions of materialist dogmas. That man should rend man in the struggle for existence was set forth as a cruel but necessary law of nature. Even the political economists who decried war because of its cost did not attack this basic teaching. In the act of fighting for their dream the American people consigned these dogmas to the rubbish heap. What, indeed, are dreams but forerunners of the fact? Cloudland mists though they seem at times, do they not finally shape themselves into actualities? Was not religious liberty once a dream? Were not political democracy and universal education? So, too, the spirit of national unselfishness?

Have not the American people, we ask again, converted many of their dreams into massive facts?

This, however, was not a dream shadowed in nebulous form. It came forth in the corporality of a practical plan, that of the League of Nations. Of this Woodrow Wilson was the accredited originator and father. He, himself, in a speech traced its indirect beginnings to the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine and the ensuing tacit bond between North and South American Republics. The idea of a confederation for peace was not in itself new. King Henry IV of France in the sixteenth century suggested such a tribunal, but it was to be composed wholly of a compact of kings. The (supposedly) crazy Emperor Paul of Russia a century and a quarter ago proposed that kings, instead of commanding their subjects to slaughter, should themselves settle their quarrels and feuds by personal combat.

But the idea of peoples abolishing war by the elimination of causes was an old and peculiarly American ideal. We have hitherto adverted to the American peace societies the first of which was organized in 1814; how they combated the notion that war was a glorious thing; and how they carried on a propaganda for the education of the young on the horrors of the battlefields, war's great costs and its other abominations. As far as their lights directed them, those societies sought to strike at the causes sustaining what they termed "the custom of war." As they saw them, those causes were partly the evil designs of kings, partly the depravity embedded in mankind, and to some extent in the wrong education of children and the heresies of the church on the subject.

In many another history the detailed narrative of the World War is told—a war that cost perhaps ten million lives and hundreds of billions of dollars in property. In direct money outlays it cost the United States nearly twenty-four billion dollars. We need not here other than refer to the sudden end-

ing of the war on November 11, 1918, by Germany's asking for and being granted an armistice; the craven flight of Emperor William of Germany; the dethronement of the Hohenzollern, Hapsburg and other dynasties; the emergence of republics and the victory of democracy. Militarism overcome, the supreme object now was to reorganize Europe on the basis of democracy.

President Wilson went to Europe to attend the Peace Conference in Paris. In London, Paris and other cities he was greeted with the most extraordinary manifestations of popular acclamation. His journey was a continuous jubilant ovation. Vast crowds lining the streets cheered him enthusiastically. He was saluted by dignitaries as the savior of a war-racked continent.

The London *Chronicle* said that the President represented America, and came as the spokesman and champion of a point of view for which, more or less clearly, the majority of eight hundred thousand British soldiers had given their lives. The London *Daily Express* said that the bread of freedom which was cast upon the Atlantic in the seventeenth century, when the *Mayflower* sailed for the New World, had been found again. "Liberty, exiled for a moment, has returned across the seas to keep free the Old World with a million marching feet." The London *Daily Mail* said that all desired to know by actual sight a great republican representing a country which had turned the scale of the war and to see a nation's chief who had crossed the Atlantic "to make a distracted and war-torn Europe also a safer world for democracy." The Paris *Temps* said: "Our visitor expects no flattery from us. He is the chief of a free nation and likes to be told the truth on this side of the Atlantic as well as on the other side. He will listen to convictions more willingly than to adulation." The *Journal des Debats* of Paris said: "President Wilson's greatest desire is to bring about a lasting peace based upon justice. That goal is also ours.

All Frenchmen must use their utmost strength to bring about the realization of that ideal. Americans rushed to our assistance in the name of certain principles, which involved certain conditions. The danger is past, but the principles and conditions remain."

Twenty-seven countries, large and small of all continents, were represented at the Peace Conference. President Wilson presented his project for a League of Nations to secure the peace of the world. The dream was accompanied by an outline of the machinery by which its consummation was proposed. He expressly disclaimed presuming to think that various complicated questions could be arbitrarily settled by the conference, and wisely urged the need of leaving them open for subsequent modification. The League of Nations, he advocated, should be organized to remain a continuity, always functioning to keep a vigilant eye upon the common interest of nations. It was to represent peoples, not ruling classes.

"Gentlemen," he said, "the select classes of mankind are no longer the governors of mankind. The fortunes of mankind are now in the hands of the plain people of the whole world. Satisfy them, and you have not only justified their confidence, but have established peace. Fail to satisfy them, and no arrangement that you can make will either set up or steady the peace of the world." The representatives of the United States, he further said, regarded the great project for a League of Nations "as the keynote of the whole which expressed our purpose and ideals in this war and which the associated nations have accepted as a basis of settlement."

In a speech previously made at Manchester, England, President Wilson pointed out how from the beginning of its history the United States had always felt it must keep itself separate from any kind of connection with European politics. The United States, he gave notification, was not concerned with European



politics, but was "interested in the partnership of right between America and Europe." Later in that speech he said that there was just then a great voice of humanity abroad in the world which he was deaf who could not hear. There was a great compulsion of the common conscience the resisting of which would give any statesman the most unenviable reputation in history. "We," he said, "are not obeying the mandates of parties or politics. We are obeying the mandate of humanity."

Part I of the treaty of peace with Germany contained the Covenant of the League of Nations. The drafting of the covenant was a collaborative production, the work of President Wilson and other minds. The first articles provided that in addition to the original members, any self-governing State, Dominion or Colony could become a member if its admission was acceptable to two-thirds of the member States. It also had to give effective guarantees of its sincere intention to observe its international obligations and such regulations as the League prescribed in regard to its military, naval and air forces and armaments. The permanent functioning of the League was provided for by the creation of an Assembly, a Council and a Secretariat. The Council was to meet at least once a year or more often if occasion required. The first meeting of the Assembly and of the Council was to be summoned by the President of the United States of America. The seat of the League was to be at Geneva, although provision was made that it could be established elsewhere at any time the Council so decided. All positions under or in connection with the League, including the Secretariat, were to be open equally to men and women.

Recognizing that the maintenance of peace required the reduction of national armaments to the lowest needful point, the Covenant of the League provided that the Council should formulate plans accordingly, taking into consideration the particular circumstances of each country. A permanent Commission was



to be appointed to advise the council as to the execution of these various provisions.

By Article 10 the members of the League undertook "to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any such threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled."

Article 11 declared that any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any member of the League or not, was a matter of concern to the whole League which should take any action deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. Any member of the League was accorded the friendly right to bring before the League's Assembly or Council any circumstance of an international character threatening to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depended.

The League's members were pledged by Article 12 to the agreement that if between them there should arise any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they would submit the matter either to arbitration or to inquiry; in no case was there to be any resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the report of the Council, which latter was to be made within six months after the submission of the dispute. Article 13 provided that any dispute which could not be settled by diplomacy should be submitted to arbitration.

The project of the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice was provided for by Article 14. This Court was to pass upon any dispute of an international character submitted to it by members, and was empowered to give an advisory opinion upon any dispute referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly. Article 15 provided in further detail for the adjustment of disputes.

Article 16 provided that if any member of the League resorted to war in disregard of these covenants, it should *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all others of the League's members. These undertook immediately to subject the offending nation to the severance of all trade or financial relations, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or individual intercourse between the covenant-breaking State and the peoples of other States. It was made the duty of the Council in such a case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air forces the League's members should severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the League's covenants.

In all, the Covenant of the League of Nations contained twenty-six articles defining the scope, obligations, aims and conditions of that body.

Secret treaties were outlawed by Article 18 which required that every treaty or international engagement entered into by any League member should be registered with the Secretariat and as soon as possible be published by it; no treaty or international engagement was to be binding until it was so registered.

Article 19 left the way open to reconsideration of treaties as changing circumstances required.

The automatic abrogation of all obligations or understandings inconsistent with the terms of the Covenant of the League of Nations was required by Article 20. It further bound members to refrain from entering into any engagements not in accordance with those terms.

Article 21 stated that nothing in the Covenant should be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements such as treaties of arbitration, or regional understandings such as the Monroe Doctrine, the aim of which was the maintenance of peace.

The trusteeship of helpless or backward peoples was embodied

in Article 22. This provided for the issuance of Mandates to particular suitable countries for the governing of colonial possessions ceasing to be under sovereignty of such nations as Germany and Turkey. These possessions were "inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world," and "there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization."

Largely of a general humanitarian nature, Article 23 bound the League's members to the carrying out of existing or future international conventions in various endeavors. One was to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labor for men, women and children. A second pledge was to undertake to secure just treatment of native inhabitants of territories under their control. A third intrusted the League with a general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs. A fourth gave the League a general supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition with countries in which their control was necessary for the common interest.

Final articles provided for the continuation and extension of international bureaus, and pledged the League's members to encourage authorized Red Cross organizations established to promote health, prevent disease and mitigate suffering throughout the world.

The League of Nations plan was lauded by the assembled European leaders. Either fully or conditionally, American newspapers of different political affiliations praised its purposes.

The New York *World* said of the plan: "Even five years ago such a constitution would have been received with derision as the work of amiable and impracticable dreamers. Today it is not only the most important but the most profoundly serious political document of the century, for it marks a new stage in the political

and social progress of mankind." Criticizing some of its provisions as being incomplete and inconclusive, the New York *Tribune* said that "on the whole, therefore, there is some gain for peace."

The Boston *Herald* declared that the plan was likely to rank as one of the great landmarks in human history. "The world," its editorial went on, "has waited more than twenty centuries for something of this sort—for a sincere attempt to bring the ideal of international peace into the realm of concrete realities. It may be that these twenty-six articles will not provide mankind with certain means of avoiding war, but their adoption at any rate prefigures the longest step that the world has ever taken in this direction." The Philadelphia *Inquirer* said that the plan was one which most sane persons would accept; that its object was to keep the world free from wars, and although that object might not always be attained with certainty, yet it was difficult to see how another such upheaval as the World War could easily be repeated.

The Baltimore *American* said: "Without regard for its full practicability, its meaning, its purpose and its aims are sublime, idealism finds practical insurance, and humanity is invited to see the formation of a world court of justice and arbitration." The St. Paul *Pioneer Press* eulogized the plan as one "embodying in itself the combined wisdom and judgment of the profoundest minds of the earth's leading nations." The St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* said that the plan was primarily a moral force; that any nation was reluctant to bind itself to go to war upon the decision of some agency outside of itself; and that no doubt the League plan went as far as was now practical in providing means of enforcement. "But," the editorial continued, "we are inclined to think that the main value of the League . . . will be found in the machinery of international coöperation which it creates, and in the habit of mutual consideration it will establish. It is suffi-

cient for the moment that it is born, and no birth of history, save one, is of greater importance to mankind."

The analysis by one newspaper in particular—the *New York Sun*—indicated a line of deeper objections than appeared on the surface, and foreboded the violent criticism to which the League plan would be subjected by American antagonists. It pointed out Constitutional obstacles, saying that without an amendment to the Constitution Congress could not be divested of its exclusive and inalienable powers to declare war, make treaties and raise revenue by means of tariff or other economic measures. These specific objections became the cue to a formidable opposition party which soon developed.

But there were other reasons breeding adverse feeling or quickening outright opposition.



## CHAPTER XX

### ROADS TO A RÉGIME OF PEACE

IN a speech at Paris on December 21, 1918, President Wilson had exclaimed: "The triumph of freedom in this war means that spirit shall now dominate the world. There is a great wave of moral force moving through the world, and every man who opposes himself to that wave will go down in disgrace."

Of the special time in which he spoke that declaration was true. As an admonition and a forecast it no doubt took a tolerably correct long-range view. It did not, however, allow for sharp oscillations in human affairs. Immersed in the promotion of superlative ideals, President Wilson overlooked the law of the pendulum. For the moment, the historian was lost in the idealist.

Other noted Americans warned America to expect a reaction from its lofty idealism. Witness Dr. A. Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard University. In his annual report, on January 31, 1919, he wrote: "On the spiritual side, also, any great moral effort is liable to be followed by a period of moral relaxation. After a great war, therefore, and not least perhaps after a war that has awakened so great enthusiasm and devotion, it is wise to beware of a materialistic reaction."

Inexorably the reaction came. From an eminence of moral grandeur the American people—or at least extensive portions—slid rapidly into a contentious atmosphere of political self-absorption. Distraction succeeded unity; practicality and expediency sprang forward with assurance to confound the precepts of idealists.

At the time this rebound seemed disconcerting. But it was

only a repetition of what had happened before in the career of the American people. Just such experiences (as we have already noted) had befallen them after the Revolution and succeeding the Civil War. In both cases the slumps were acute but fairly transient and were followed by a resumption of idealistic achievements. William Howard Taft, former President of the United States, had a clear perception of this process. "We are back again in the old region of the doldrums where progress to better things seems as slow as it was before the war," he said in an address at Baltimore, on October 15, 1919. "We should not be discouraged, however. It is the frailty of human nature. It is to be found in its inability to maintain for long periods its adherence to the highest ideals. Real progress in the world is only through a course of action and reaction. This reaction will be succeeded by an onward and upward movement, and we shall find the world better because of its sacrifices and the lesson they taught. We shall not make the same progress that we hoped for, but we shall step on and on."

Considered by itself such a depiction might be interpreted as a lament that American idealism was under a complete eclipse. That was far from being the case. The altruistic interest of many Americans in Europe's political questions waned or shifted to refuge in aloofness. But the active interest of the American nation in humanity whether in Europe, Asia or anywhere else was at heart as keen as ever.

War and famine left a wake of heartrending conditions of destitution and suffering among numerous populations. The American people did everything in their power to afford prompt and adequate relief. Congress advanced \$100,000,000 as a revolving fund for the relief of distressed European peoples, and made an outright appropriation of \$20,000,000 to feed the starving people in Russia. In February, 1919, the American Relief Administration, with Herbert Hoover the appointed chairman,

was organized to carry out the systematic work of feeding and of providing clothing, medicines and other supplies. Through a series of years it distributed relief to millions of people in Russia, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Germany, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Hungary, Roumania and Jugo-Slavia.

In addition to the sums appropriated by Congress, further large sums were contributed by American religious, non-sectarian and philanthropic organizations and by American private benevolence. The total sum expended by the American Relief Commission and by the Commission for Relief in Belgium amounted to approximately \$1,600,000,000.

Another organization, the Near East Relief, chartered by Congress, August 6, 1919, distributed supplies in a part of South-eastern Europe, all of Western Asia, the trans-Caucasia region and Persia. It saved more than a million women and children from starvation; took care of great numbers of orphans; and provided food, clothing, shelter, work and hospital treatment for the hordes of destitute sick in the vast area in which it operated. Its expenditures totaled (up to 1924) approximately \$80,000,000, including supplies received from the American Relief Administration.

The League of Nations plan was made a hot partisan issue. To the American people the subject of foreign relations as a political issue was radically new. They had been spared such a problem from the time of Washington and Jefferson when America's isolation from foreign entanglements had been grounded as a steadfast principle of national policy. Now they were suddenly plunged into an unaccustomed kind of controversy. So sheer an innovation was the League plan, such an abrupt departure from long-taught traditions, that many Americans were nonplussed. They could not see their way to a precipitate adjusting of their cherished beliefs to new conceptions.

The League, according to former President Taft, was an un-

avoidable departure the need of which the war had demonstrated. A goodly number of Americans adhered to this view. A larger body was detached by differing sentiments. Some—and no small proportion—soon tired of a raging dispute concerning matters alien to the sphere of their normal outlook. Others resumed their exclusively national focus. Still others felt that they needed due time to think over the question of reconciling old traditions with a new attitude. Above all, many Americans were not convinced that the wiles and snares of European and Asiatic diplomacy had come to an end. They feared the recurrence of these, and the possible danger to America. The dominant American feeling grew into one of extreme caution.

Vehement speeches for and against the League of Nations plan were made. The treaty of peace with Germany, containing the plan, was signed at Versailles on June 28, 1919, by the representatives of all the Allied Powers and by those of Germany. On July 10, 1919, President Wilson submitted it to the United States Senate. But months before it was signed and transmitted, the opposition, led by a forceful group of Senators, had manifested itself in an outburst of passionate addresses.

The main arguments of the opposition ran: While in an emotional state America's representatives were making a sudden transition in passing from the time-tried policy of aloofness to that of entering upon irrevocable alliances. By taking away its exclusive interpretation from America, the League's provisions endangered the Monroe Doctrine. Article 10 rested upon the use of naked force and bound the United States to guarantee the independence and boundaries of any country. It was a perilous proposition to bind the American people to guarantee the territorial integrity of the far-flung British Empire, including its self-governing Dominions and Colonies, or that of the Balkan States or of China or Japan, or of French, Italian and Portuguese colonies in Africa. With the United States pledged to such a



guarantee, any of the countries in the League could, in the event of exterior aggression, demand America's armed assistance. American soldiers would then have to go forth at the command of foreign countries. Under the League's provisions, whereby each State, self-governing Dominion or Colony had a vote, the United States could easily be outvoted by such a country as England with its plurality of votes. Under the League plan as drafted America's domestic questions—immigration, for example—could be interfered with. The cause of peace in North and South America would not be advanced by annexing these continents to the European system. America was actuated by almost purely altruistic motives, but in whatever it did it must be allowed to go its own way without restraint, and with its sovereignty, independence and welfare unimpaired. It was fine to idealize but it was more practical to improve America in every way before attempting the miracle of Old World stabilization. America was entitled to examine every proposition with the utmost care to assure itself that it did not do itself any injustice or make future conditions worse instead of better.

The League's supporters advanced these arguments: Was it not for the cause of peace and humanity that America had fought? Was it not to do away with or at least minimize to harmlessness the old baleful international suspicions, jealousies, rivalries and hatreds? Had not the world just been through a vast catastrophe? Why assume that the causes must and would remain? The great lesson of that terrific war would be utterly lost if nations did not come together in a League of Nations to insure peace. When President Wilson proclaimed his Fourteen Points they crystallized mankind's aspirations, and were then unanimously acclaimed as the prime objects for which America was fighting. Those Fourteen Points provided for a League of Nations. No objection was then made by any Americans to any part of the Fourteen Points; not until a year later did partisan



opposition show itself. This opposition had taken a view of material expediency, and not a humanitarian and moral point of view. America had assumed the moral leadership of the world. Would it not now be grossly recreant if it reneged? Was any plan, especially in its original stages, ever formulated without defects? But there was no justifiable ground for any assault upon the League of Nations plan. It did not violate the American policy against alliances with foreign countries. On the contrary, it prevented that very danger. By the plan a two-thirds vote of all of the members was necessary as a permission to a war action by any member. Was it conceivable that two-thirds of the members would sanction war? By the plan recognizing special geographical and other conditions, the United States was left free to control its army and navy. The words of Section 10 were taken from a resolution passed by The Hague Peace Conference in 1907, and aimed to put so effective a check upon one of the causes of war that no country could afford to defy it. As the League membership was constituted, America could not be outvoted on any question affecting the Monroe Doctrine for the reason that only a few of the European members had political interests in the western hemisphere. The purpose of the Monroe Doctrine was to prevent the European system from reaching out further to the western hemisphere, and to allow Latin-American countries to work out their destiny without European interference. That aim had been accomplished, and there was no danger of any subversion of that doctrine. If the Old World conditions of nation against nation were allowed to remain, the old historical combustions might be repeated. America had attained such a position of supremacy that, if it did not coöperate for a world reign of peace, it might sometime have to prepare to be challenged by rival or covetous nations. Such a situation had arisen repeatedly in history and might again occur. In that case America

would have to raise huge armies and navies at ruinous cost. It would have to encounter the new, changed conditions of air and chemical warfare. No part of the country would be safe from air fleets dropping death and destruction among whole populations. From every aspect, isolation was a relic of bygone conditions, and America should revise its views accordingly.

Upon his return to America President Wilson in frequent addresses besought the American people to support the League of Nations plan. He said that he did not consider the extraordinarily generous reception given to him in Europe as personal to himself. It was accorded to him as a representative of the great American nation.

"There was no mistaking the voice of those great crowds," he said. "It was not a tone of mere greeting . . . it was the calling of comrade to comrade, the cries that come from men who say, 'We have waited for this day, when the friends of liberty should come across the sea and shake hands with us, to see that a new world was constructed upon a new basis and foundation of justice and right.' " President Wilson told the American people that the proudest thing he had to report was that "this great country of ours is trusted throughout the world." He assured Americans that the men participating in the conference realized that they were not the masters but the servants of their people and that "the spirit of their people has awakened to a new purpose and a new conception of their power." Having taken the moral leadership of the world and having the esteem and confidence of the whole world, America, President Wilson said, should as a matter of duty and honor sustain the action of its representatives as signatories to the League of Nations plan.

While the treaty containing this plan was being considered and debated by the United States Senate, President Wilson went on speaking tours throughout the country, exerting himself to the ut-

most to sway and steady public sentiment in favor of the plan. Some of his partisan opponents took advantage of the occasion to make bitter criticisms descending to vilification of him for committing the United States to the League of Nations plan. On the night of September 25, 1919, he was stricken with an attack of paralysis at Wichita, Kansas, was forced to return to Washington, and for a long time lay prostrate. Meanwhile, the Foreign Relations Committee had reported the treaty with a series of amendments, and others were offered from the floor of the Senate. All were defeated. This result led to some efforts at compromise, and on November 6, 1919, Senator Lodge, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, presented a list of fourteen reservations. By a Republican majority vote the Senate agreed to nearly all of them.

In substance the more important of these reservations were: The United States could withdraw from the League by concurrent resolution of Congress and only by such action, and it was to be the sole judge of whether its international obligations had been fulfilled. The United States assumed no obligation to preserve the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country or to interfere in controversies between nations. No mandate was to be accepted by the United States except by action of Congress. The United States reserved to itself exclusively the right to determine what questions were within its domestic jurisdiction. The United States would not submit to arbitration or to inquiry by the Assembly or by the Council of the League of Nations any question which, in the judgment of the United States, affected the Monroe Doctrine. Congress would provide by law for the appointment of American representatives to the League of Nations, and until such appointments had been approved by the Senate, no citizen of the United States should be appointed or should participate in any of the League's functions.

The United States was not to contribute to any direct or indirect expenses of the League of Nations until Congress had appropriated funds. If the United States at any time adopted any plan proposed by the Council of the League of Nations for the limitation of armaments, it reserved the right to increase such armaments without the consent of the Council whenever it was threatened with invasion or engaged in war. The United States assumed no obligation to be bound by the proceedings of the League Council or Assembly in which any member of the League and its self-governing dominions, colonies or parts of empire cast in the aggregate more than one vote.

By November 18, 1919, President Wilson was well enough to see Senator Hitchcock, the Democratic leader in the Senate, whom he informed that he regarded these reservations as nothing less than a nullification of the treaty. On the next day the Senate voted upon the ratification of the treaty of which the reservations were made a part. The resolution of ratification was defeated by a vote of fifty-five to thirty-nine, with one member not voting. As a two-thirds vote was necessary for ratification, the revised version of the treaty was thus rejected. A motion to reconsider was adopted. A further motion for unconditional ratification of the treaty without the fourteen reservations was defeated by a vote of fifty-three to thirty-eight, with four not voting. On March 19, 1920, the United States Senate again rejected the original treaty of peace. A separate treaty of peace with Germany was made in 1921 by the United States, and ratified by the German National Council and by the United States Senate.

A leading Republican newspaper later summarized the situation: "Woodrow Wilson was a man who reached out for new ideas. Traditions did not bind him in his action, yet tradition



defeated him at last in what seemed to be his greatest ambition, the creation of a world government. His own people could not see eye to eye with him. To them Europe was very far off, and the warnings of Washington and Monroe still rang in their ears. Their instinct scented danger of which their intellectual President was unaware."

The election in 1920 of Senator Harding to the Presidency could not altogether be construed as a manifested repudiation by the voters of the League of Nations plan. The large vote for the Republican candidates contained in part the expression of restlessness and discontent bred of the war. High taxes and the greatly enhanced cost of living had their influence. In point of fact, Senator Harding, as far as record went, was not opposed to a League. In the Senate he had voted twice for the League with Article 10 omitted. He had also promised to initiate an association of nations. His declaration as to this was vague and general but in essence it amounted to the same thing as the United States entering the League of Nations fortified by the reservations put forth by the Republicans.

Meanwhile the first meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations took place at Geneva, Switzerland, on November 15, 1920. Never in the entire and varied annals of human history did there exist an occasion even remotely paralleling this remarkable assemblage of representatives of forty-one nations of almost every race, religion and language. Deep regrets were uttered that America with its one hundred and ten million people had failed to enter the League, and hopes were expressed that the land of Washington and Lincoln would not turn its face away from a plan to coöperate for the world's peace and prosperity. A message of gratitude was sent to President Wilson. The five weeks' discussion by the League of Nations Assembly had immediate results of both a moral and practical nature.

That representatives of so many peoples found it possible to



coöperate in a great diversity of international concerns was a fact of unprecedented significance. A sense of moral power and practical authority, backed by the conviction that it served a great purpose, pervaded the Assembly and filled the delegates with confidence that the League was a permanent institution and would live because humanity needed it. The spirit of the League was shown by the admission of former enemy and of neutral States. But the greatest achievement of the League's first meeting was the adoption of the project drafted by the Advisory Committee of Jurists at The Hague in the summer of 1920 for a Permanent Court of International Justice. Thus was taken a step for the substitution of reason for force in the settling of international disputes.

The establishment of a World Court was essentially an American idea. Elihu Burritt, the American "learned blacksmith," argued for it in both America and Europe nearly a century ago. Secretary of State John Hay, in his instructions to the American delegates to The Hague Conference in 1899, strongly urged the far-reaching benefits of such a tribunal and directed them to advocate it. Again, in 1907, Secretary of State Elihu Root instructed American delegates to support the proposition. Republican platforms repeatedly and specifically indorsed a World Court. Both Presidents Roosevelt and Taft had advocated it.

In his campaign speeches in 1920 Senator Harding stated his unreserved indorsement, and when President he approved America's joining the World Court, subject to certain reservations formulated by Secretary of State Hughes for the safeguarding of America's policy and interests. Reviewing the foreign policy of his administration, President Harding stated in 1923 that he would be insensible to duty and violate his sentiments and convictions if he failed to urge American support of the Permanent

Court of International Justice. Such a court, he said, might not be unfailing in the avoidance of war, but it was a step in the right direction toward peace. "Why," he asked, "should there not be a court of this character with the most cordial American support? We originated the modern suggestion of such a tribunal and have been advocating it for years." In a message to the Senate, President Harding urged the adhesion of the United States to the World Court. In messages to Congress President Coolidge, Harding's successor, commended this course as the only practical plan on which many nations had ever agreed and pointing to the proposed reservations as clearly indicating why the United States refused to join the League of Nations.

Independently of the League, a Conference for Limitation of Armaments was called by President Harding in 1921. It met at Washington in 1921, and was successful in obtaining an agreement by the United States, England, France, Italy and Japan to limit competition in building capital battleships according to a proportionate formula. Following this treaty many battleships were destroyed by the nations concerned. Treaties were also adopted prohibiting the employment of submarines to destroy commerce, the use of poison gas, and for the removal of misunderstandings in the Pacific. The Democratic criticism of the result of that conference was that it achieved in a lesser and partial degree what could have been much more effectively and far more widely accomplished by America's entering the League of Nations.

Pathetically broken in health but with spirit unimpaired, Woodrow Wilson retained to the last his full faith in the League of Nations. That it progressed so well year after year even without its main sponsor a member, augured well, he thought, and was a source of satisfaction to him. The League, he believed,

had demonstrated beyond refutation its practicability and its value to humanity.

Speaking over the radio from the seclusion of his home on S Street, Washington, to millions of listening Americans on November 10, 1923, the eve of Armistice Day, he broadcasted a forceful appeal to the American people. He reminded them of "the high levels of vision and achievement upon which the great war for democracy was fought and won." He told them that "the stimulating memories of that happy time of triumph are forever marred and embittered for us by the shameful fact that when the victory was won—won, be it remembered, chiefly by the indomitable spirit and valiant sacrifices of our own unconquerable soldiers—we turned our backs upon our associates." He went on to say that "we refused to bear any responsible part in the administration of peace . . . and withdrew into a sullen and selfish isolation which is deeply ignoble because manifestly cowardly and dishonorable." He called upon America to "put aside programs of self-interest and devote itself to practicing and establishing the highest ideals of disinterested service and the constant maintenance of exalted standards of conscience and of right." Only by again formulating and acting upon the highest ideals and purposes of international policy could America, he said, return to its true traditions.

When Woodrow Wilson died on February 3, 1924, partisan feelings were dropped, and all Americans united in glowing tributes to his ideals and deeds. Leaders of other peoples expressed unstinted praise of his exalted aims and character. "A great spirit has gone out." "He spiritualized democracy." "A very great man." "An extraordinary personality." "A noble idealist, a lofty soul and a genuine lover of mankind." "One of the greatest of our Presidents." "Undeniably one of the most commanding figures in human history." "Hundreds of millions of people will revere his name through the years to come."

These, in essence, were a random few of the outflow of panegyrics.

At a time of monstrous turmoil when civilization seemed nearly doomed, when frenzied waves of passion and hatred lashed the world, and when the spirits of peoples crouched in despair, Woodrow Wilson proclaimed a new hope which thrilled and rejuvenated the heart of mankind. The name-worshipping biographer of the future may say that all this proceeded from him as a personality. But above all he was the spokesman of the American people; from them he drew his inspiration; in the main, he put into electrifying words their thoughts and ideals.

America's ideals generated a world-looming new type of great man in Wilson. In the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine and in the Spanish-American War the world saw two great examples of America's transcending localities and boundaries and unselfishly acting for the well-being and interest of other peoples. In the World War this concern for humanity was extended to cover every continent. The great man of all former times was he acquiring renown by his achievements for a particular people and a particular country. Filled with traditional American ideals, Woodrow Wilson sought to plan practically for the good of humanity. He carried to a supreme height ideals that America had already demonstrated in a precursory degree. Whatever may be the eventual outcome of his League of Nations project, the motive inducing it will always stand out as a genuine effort toward the brotherhood of mankind.

Reducing to essentials the stand of America's political parties we find that all hold the ideal of world peace. Democratic sentiment approves America's joining the League of Nations. The Republican Party believes in the substitution of law for war and advocates America's membership in the Permanent Court of International Justice because of its being a judicial, not a political



body. The radical elements regard the Versailles Treaty as the breeder of another war, advocate its revision and urge the promotion of treaty agreements with all nations to outlaw wars, abolish conscription, drastically reduce air, land and naval armaments, and guarantee public referendums on peace and war.

At this writing fifty-four nations are members of the League of Nations, and nearly all have agreed to the protocol for a World Court. The League has been steadily moving toward the accomplishment of three great results—compulsory arbitration, security and disarmament. For the first time in history the principle has been adopted that any nation declining to submit a quarrel to arbitration shall be branded the aggressor and restrained by force. Should two parties to a dispute both be declared aggressors war would be localized by their being encircled by a drastic boycott enforced by all other member nations. The compulsory arbitration covenant is defined as meaning that all agreeing nations are to support it against an aggressor with all the weapons at their disposal, whether they be economic, financial, military, naval or aërial. In arguing for the adoption of the protocol containing this World Court covenant, delegates did not venture to say that there might not be another war. But, as Aristide Briand, former Prime Minister of France, said, the protocol constituted the most formidable obstacle to war ever devised by the human mind.

Disarmament of nations is the next step proposed. To be effective this necessarily carries with it much more than the elimination of large armies and navies. It also means air armaments. With these three forms of war instruments reduced to negligibility, established war machines will be obsolete. There will still remain, however, an indirect yet powerful auxiliary of war in the use of industrial plants for the making of chemicals. The character of war is now largely of an industrial nature. Under the tension of war combatants might violate agreements



not to use poison gas and other such agencies of destruction. Consequently, the real factor in any disarmament project is a moral one—the sincere desire of all nations to make an ideal of peace and hold to it. Thus we come back to the potency of that idealism which not so long ago was placed in the tenuous region of impracticability.

## CHAPTER XXI

### CURBING PLUTOCRACY

SAYING that he was proud to have fought against slavery, Representative J. R. Hawley, speaking in Congress on February 25, 1873, on the methods of modern business corporations in general and of the *Crédit Mobilier* bribery in particular, declared: "If I do not mistake the times, we are coming to a conflict with an enemy as great and more dangerous."

General Hawley was not the only member of Congress expressing this view. "This," said Representative W. S. Holman, two days later, in discussing the *Crédit Mobilier* scandal, "is the first open and undisguised contest between the great and irresponsible corporations, those empires which you have created in this Republic, and the people of this Republic, as represented on this floor. . . . The question at issue is whether the American people or the great private corporations which you have endowed with imperial powers and imperial franchises shall be represented on this floor and control the legislation of Congress against the people, and promote their own aggrandizement at the expense of the people." Representative Merrick described how lobbyists representing the interests of corporations swarmed into the halls of Congress and of the various State legislatures. Representative Swann of Maryland told how "the growing tendency to corruption which appears to be taking possession of the active business of the country in all its important pursuits is strongly illustrated by the history of the Union Pacific Railroad." This corruption, he said, was "so barefaced as to excite the shame and indignation of the whole American people."

With the slavery issue disposed of, the people of the United

States could now begin to concentrate upon the aim to subjugate the powers of wealth and the ensuing corruptions and oppressions.

The bribery going on seemed alarmingly new, but this was because in prior times the attention of the American people had been preoccupied with other problems. As a method of obtaining properties and privileges, bribery was begun almost at the very settlement of the country. In a previous chapter we have shown how British governors and other officials introduced and profited by it.

After the Revolution these methods were continued by various groups seeking great land grants or bank charters. The enormous Yazoo grant of about 35,000,000 acres was obtained in 1795 by the corruption of the Georgia legislature. Whereupon the people of Georgia elected a new legislature which annulled the act. One reason given for annulment was that the American people had established a democratic government which was "totally opposed to all proprietary grants or monopolies in favor of a few, which tend to build up that destructive aristocracy in the New, which is tumbling in the Old World; and which, if permitted, must end in the annihilation of democracy and equal rights." But the Supreme Court of the United States stepped in and by its decision (in the case of *Fletcher vs. Peck* in 1810) decided that the grant was in the nature of a contract which could not be revoked by subsequent legislation. Under this decision the beneficiaries were able to exact an indemnity of nearly \$5,000,000 from Congress in 1814.

In others of my books specific details from the records are given as to this transaction and many other briberies. The men instigating this corruption and profiting from it were nearly all of the aristocratic party scheming to add large economic and financial power to aristocratic pretension. Jefferson denounced moneyed aristocracies, and condemned the jugglers procuring bank charters and manipulating paper currency. Likewise did

Jackson. He believed that distinctions in society would always exist, but law, he wrote, should not be used to add "artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuities and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful."

The great and successful fight carried on by Jackson against the Bank of the United States represented a division between the mass of Americans whose aim was to obtain nothing more than "a comfortable competence" for themselves, and a group aspiring to a combined aristocratic and plutocratic power. The proved corruption of this Bank shocked the American people, and its overshadowing power alarmed them. Numerous memorials were sent to Congress by legislatures and by meetings of farmers, laborers and mechanics declaring the existence of the Bank of the United States to be dangerous to the rights of the people and as intrenching a power which imperiled the stability of republican institutions. Many a resolution was adopted by popular mass meetings calling upon the people "to resist the encroachments of a purse-proud aristocracy," and giving warning that "the accumulation of money in the hands of a few has proved the bane of former republics."

In Congress corporations were bitterly denounced as devices for the rich to oppress the poor and steal power from the many to whom it belonged and confer it upon the few who never ought to have it. That corporations were then economic necessities was often lost sight of in the popular aim to prevent the rise of a moneyed aristocracy which, it was clearly seen, was embodying itself in corporate form, armed with perpetual charters, and flouting both law and the people. So strong was the popular feeling that charters were but a more modern method of creating a moneyed aristocracy, that promoters of corporations had to resort to indirection or bribery to obtain them. In instance after instance, Congress, legislatures and common councils were debauched to give charters, franchises, land or money grants and

other special privileges. An \$800,000 bribery fund used by the La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad Company in 1856 to get a land grant of about a million acres of public lands was but one of many proved instances of railroad corruption.

After thus securing charters and grants, corporations then turned upon the people and robbed them by various arts. In 1842 a questionnaire was sent out by Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State, to United States judges and district attorneys as to the operation of the bankruptcy law of 1841. C. Anthony, U. S. District Attorney at Columbus, Ohio, replied: "If corporations were brought within its [the law's] range, it would render it much more beneficial, and make the law decidedly more popular." J. Holmes, U. S. District Attorney at Portland, Me., reported that the law needed amending so as "effectually to check irresponsible and speculating associations which are but too often combinations to swindle the public." These are some of the typical comments set forth in Senate Document No. 19, 1842. The practice of issuing fictitious ("watered") stock was common.

Before the Civil War far-sighted Americans saw the coming contest between people and plutocracy, between Man and Money. Lincoln predicted that it would be a greater struggle than that in which he was called upon to take part. Taking advantage of the absorption of the American people in the conflict over slavery and in the outgrowing reconstruction problems, men such as Cornelius Vanderbilt and Jay Gould consummated vast schemes of self-aggrandizement. In 1868 Jay Gould and his associate directors of the Erie Railroad spent at least \$1,000,000 in corrupting the New York legislature. This was only one of a multitude of prevalent corruptions. In 1873 came the revelations showing that, during the Civil War, the promoters of the Union Pacific Railroad had distributed \$436,000 in bribes to get an act passed by Congress greatly increasing its money and land subsidies and so altering the original act that the Government had



slight opportunity of recovering its financial outlays. It was largely by such methods that the railroad companies obtained at various times grants amounting to a total of more than 155,000,000 acres of public lands directly and indirectly from the Federal Government, many millions of acres more from the States, and huge aggregate sums in subsidies.

Having obtained these, they built the railroads but they also issued enormous quantities of fictitious stock, robbed the people by discriminating charges, developed a system of giving secret rebates to favored corporations, connived at the formation of oppressive trusts, and corrupted public life by a widespread distribution of free passes entitling a privileged class to gratuitous transportation.

The contest of the American people against domineering plutocracy began in real earnest in 1872. Reflecting the popular demand that plutocratic powers be curbed and their abuses legislated against, all political parties, in national and State conventions, declared in favor of redressive laws. The Grange movement and its successor the Farmers' Alliance, the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor and other organizations all continuously denounced plutocracy and its methods. In 1871 Charles Francis Adams (who himself later became president of a large railroad corporation) wrote that the belief was common in America that upspringing magnates, after having created a system of quiet but irrepressible corruption, would ultimately succeed in directing government itself. "It is," Adams wrote in his "Chapters on Erie," "a new power for which our language contains no name. We know what aristocracy, autocracy, democracy are, but we have no word to express 'government by money corporations.'"

Year after year, in response to public sentiment, political parties kept formally demanding relief. So did a large part of the newspaper press. Between 1872 and 1885 more than twenty

State legislatures investigated the question of railroad power and abuses. Many sought to restrain them by legislation but could not effectively do so because it was a subject requiring uniform national legislation. In Congress the matter was annually discussed. But no regulatory measure was passed. Congress—particularly the Senate—contained numbers of members who were either promoters of or stockholders in railroads or attorneys for them. They were exceedingly adroit in obstructive tactics by raising Constitutional questions and by other means.

“Since 1872,” said Senator Van Wyck of Nebraska in a speech in the United States Senate, on January 16, 1885, “the great corporations have stifled the cry of the people, have paralyzed legislatures and Congress.” He asserted that billions of dollars of fictitious railway stock was outstanding. “Look at Kansas and Nebraska,” he went on, “great and rich in the wealth of their soil, the energy and intelligence of their people; yet Jay Gould, who neither toils nor spins, has greater wealth than the assessed property, real and personal, of both States. And Vanderbilt could buy both States, their farms and lands, villages and cities, hotels, banks, manufactories and railroads, and have a snug fortune of \$40,000,000 left for the necessities of life and to keep the wolf from the door.”

The first victory of the people was won in 1887 when the Cullom Act establishing the Interstate Commerce Commission and regulating railroads was passed by Congress. Senator Wilson of Iowa related on that occasion how the railroad magnates long had resolutely opposed all remedial efforts of the State governments and of the National Government, and how at last the principle was prevailing that no power was superior to that of the people. Senator Palmer said that railroads were no longer stock companies; they were dynasties; and if not supervised and controlled by legislation, would dominate with even greater force. Senator Cullom urged that there was no subject of a public nature

about which there was such great public unanimity as upon regulation of railroads. Eighteen distinct abuses committed by railroad companies were enumerated by Senator Cullom. The Cullom Act prohibited special rates, secret rebates and other kinds of discrimination, and gave the Interstate Commerce Commission regulatory powers.

Later acts passed by Congress for greater control over railroad corporations were supplemental to this first act or enlargements of it.

For years the railroad companies had refused or evaded equipping their cars with safety appliances. Great numbers of their employees had been maimed or killed; in the four years from 1888 to 1891 alone 9,153 had been killed and 88,712 injured. The demand of the American people that this slaughter be ended grew to such proportions that even the railroad representatives in the Senate could no longer defy it.

Various public-spirited Senators ridiculed the arguments against the bill in 1893 to compel the installation of safety appliances and equipment. Senator Call of Florida pointed out that nearly one-half of railroad capitalization represented nothing but "watered" stock which, however, had the power of taxing the whole American people. They had been forced to pay in freight and transportation charges at least \$2,500,000,000 upon this "watered" stock. "Yet," said Senator Call, "the railroads complain that it will cost them \$75,000,000 or \$100,000,000 to get apparatus to protect their employees who make all the money for the men who live in luxury in palaces. . . . The opinion of the people, from Maine to Florida, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, is unanimous upon this subject." Senators Hawley, Palmer, Cullom, and Peffer spoke likewise. Congress passed the bill, and subsequently extended its provisions by a series of further acts passed from 1903 to 1915.

After the passage of the Cullom Act the railroad masters

schemed to have taken from the law the provision subjecting them to imprisonment if convicted for violation. They also sought to have wide powers of immunity granted to themselves. By the passage of the Elkins Act in 1903 they succeeded. But the Hepburn Bill, passed by Congress three years later, restored the clause providing for imprisonment and limited immunity. True, no powerful magnate had ever been sent to prison; by the lavish use of money in hiring astute lawyers and finding refuge in a maze of legal technicalities, railroad as well as other masterful capitalists violating laws had contrived to keep clear of prison. But there was always a possibility that they might go there, and they much preferred a law subjecting them to a fine the payment of which was mere play to them.

The Hepburn Act of 1906 put an end to the free pass evil. Supposedly the Cullom Act had forbidden it, yet that law had contained only a general clause which the Interstate Commerce Commission could not enforce. In the debate over abolishing free passes, Senator Patterson of Colorado, on June 7, 1906, declared free passes a pernicious system. "It taints," he said, "the legislation of every State. It impedes the independence and the patriotism of the delegates to every political convention." He described in detail how in almost every case free passes were given because of illegitimate favors expected in return. Senator La Follette pointed out that but a few years previously a leading railway auditor had declared that at least ten per cent. of all the passenger traffic of the country was upon free transportation. If, said La Follette, such an amount were applied to transportation in the year 1906 it would amount to approximately \$50,000,000 a year. In the House of Representatives the free-pass system was scathingly denounced as a factor corrupting the moral and political life of America. It had long been used in the attempt to control public opinion. Intimations were made that even the judiciary was not exempt from its influence.



As a rule, clergymen were allowed the favor of traveling on half-rate transportation.

In earlier years railroad corporations had vigorously resisted any effort to abolish free passes. But now they had arrived at the point of seeing that the system was both superfluous and an expensive nuisance. Their vested rights and properties were secure. They had found by experience that no influences, however devious, could prevail in the end against the determination of the American people. No special reason existed why the system should be retained. Many railroad presidents were now very different from the former crude types to whom power was synonymous with plunder. Pillage by railroad magnates still went on; the looting of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad causing a loss to stockholders of more than \$67,000,000, the details of which were reported by the Interstate Commerce Commission in 1914, was one of a number of instances. But there were railroad presidents of a cast of mind more in accord with the high standards the people were demanding. These executives were in favor of a law prohibiting free passes, and welcomed it when it was passed.

In succeeding years Congress passed further railroad regulatory laws, notably that of 1910 affecting issues of bonds and stocks. Generally, at the same time, various States legislated on corporation capitalization.

The contest of the American people against trade combinations and trusts was carried on simultaneously during a considerable part of the period marked by the agitation to regulate railroad corporations. The subject is a vast one, and in this brief treatment we can indicate some salient features only of the long and intense struggle.

The chief phase impressing Americans in the period from 1880 to 1890 was the gigantic financial and economic power of the accumulating number of trusts, and their possible danger to



republican institutions. That they were economic evolutions from an older and less effective order was not clearly seen, nor were the people disposed to listen to any defense of them. Resolutions and memorials were constantly sent to Congress demanding relief from the robbery and oppression of trusts and monopolies; denouncing the acts of "arrogant millionaires" and "plutocratic nabobs"; and insisting that unless remedial action was taken America would "soon be a nation of millionaires and paupers." Mass meetings declared that such plutocratic aggrandizement endangered the very existence of American governmental institutions. The entire country was stirred with a furious anti-trust agitation.

On March 21, 1890, Senator John Sherman introduced a bill for the suppression of trusts. "Now," he said, "the people of the United States as well as of other countries are feeling the power and grasp of these institutions, and are demanding of every legislature and of Congress a remedy for this evil, only grown to huge proportions in recent times. They had monopolies and mortmains of old but never such giants as in our day. . . . Society is now disturbed by forces never felt before. The popular mind is agitated with problems that may disturb the social order, and among them none is more threatening than the inequality of condition, of wealth and of opportunity that has grown within a single generation out of the concentration of capital into vast combinations to control production and trade and to bring down competition."

Elsewhere, in the course of his speech, Senator Sherman declared that such power constituted a kingly prerogative, inconsistent with our form of government. "If," he said, "we should not submit to an emperor we should not submit to an autocrat of trade, with power to prevent competition and to fix the price of any commodity." He expressed his fears that trusts would

be able to evade the provisions of his bill, but said that their power for mischief would at least be greatly curtailed.

The Sherman Act passed by Congress made trusts in restraint of trade illegal, and declared persons who thus combined or monopolized products guilty of a misdemeanor. It was supplemented by legislation in 1894 and in 1912.

Instead of being shaken by laws passed by both Congress and the States, the trusts multiplied and their power hugely increased. Statutes, investigations, prosecutions had no practical effect whatever. The Supreme Court of the United States ruled in two opposite ways. In the *Knight* case in 1895, involving the Sugar Trust, it held that combination could be made where it related to manufacture only and not to interstate and foreign commerce. On the other hand, its decree dissolved the Standard Oil Company which then re-formed its constituent companies along State lines, and has since been thus operating with the same old masterful power and efficiency.

The spokesman chiefly reflecting the views of a large part of the American people in the period from the year 1901 was President Theodore Roosevelt. In many speeches he insisted upon the ethical quality. He declared that cunning and greed were crimes as much as was violence, and that the law should set itself equally against them all. "This," he said, "is not and never shall be a government either of plutocracy or of a mob." He denounced "malefactors of great wealth," and said that the man of great wealth who did not use that wealth rightly was a menace to the community. He declared that trusts were the creatures of the State, and should be controlled to any extent called for by the public need. He demanded the fullest publicity of essential facts. "The light of day," he said, "is a great deterrer of wrong-doing." He inveighed against the parasite and against the arrogance of great wealth. "Material prosperity without the moral lift toward righteousness," he said,

"means a diminished capacity for happiness and a debased character." He also voiced a fundamental American doctrine in declaring in one of his speeches that "when property rights conflict with human rights property rights must give way."

To the great astonishment of the American people, the Sherman Act, instead of being used as an effective weapon against trusts was used as a club against labor unions upon the ground that they were combinations or conspiracies in restraint of trade. As a result, Congress was put to the necessity in 1914 of passing the Clayton Act specifically exempting labor unions and farmers' unions from the operation of anti-trust laws.

When this act was being discussed many a member of Congress had to admit that the preventive results of twenty-four years of anti-trust legislation had been nil. Mammoth industrial corporations, wielding incomprehensibly great power, flourished. Corporations had \$92,000,000,000 in stocks and bonds outstanding. This was more than double the amount at which all the farms and farm property in the United States was valued. Corporations made a total net profit of more than \$3,000,000,000. They employed more than 7,000,000 persons. Various members of Congress declared that the great problem before the American people was to make these corporations better instruments for the equitable production and distribution of wealth. And, at this writing, the situation is substantially the same as it was in 1914, and the problems the same.

However, Congress, in 1914, attacked the trusts from another direction. It created the Federal Trade Commission, giving it wide powers to prohibit unfair competition; to make investigations of corporations and alleged violations of anti-trust laws; to make recommendations and to exercise other functions. The main theory underlying the grant of some of these powers was that corporation rascality thrived best in the dark, and that publicity would act as a deterrent. Representative Covington

of Kentucky held out the hope that "the vast majority of the evils still existing in the industrial world will in the future be corrected by that pitiless publicity which will make the man of devious ways an object of reproach among his fellow-men. Where publicity fails to be a sufficient corrective, legislation will be."

Representative Murdock of Kansas, in giving an able exposition on May 21, 1914, said: "For here at the end of a struggle lasting nearly a quarter of a century, and after a drawn battle, we are to move once more on the enemy of the Republic. . . . It is nearly fifty years since Vanderbilt epitomized the economic attitude of monopoly in the exclamation, 'The public be damned.' The attitude of his class has never changed. It may have permanently omitted the early and vigorous expression of scornful condemnation from its vocabulary, but it has not changed its view, or, as is shamelessly evidenced in the New Haven piracy, its practices." Representative Dillon of South Dakota said: "The trusts and combinations must be our servants, not our masters. Let us rule them, and not allow them to rule us."

During the decades when the American people were busily occupied regulating railroads and seeking a solution for control of trusts, they were also warring in many other ways against corporate evils and corruption. Both the State legislatures and Congress persistently passed increasingly stronger laws against the manufacture of adulterated and misbranded food and drug products. The sanitary regulation of food plants and of other factories was ordered. Simultaneously in many States and cities energetic movements were carried on to explore the subtle corrupt alliance between large corporate interests and venal combinations of professional politicians. The great investigation made in 1905 by a New York legislative committee of the large life insurance companies was one of these many activities. News-



papers, magazines and periodicals throughout America were filled with exposures of prevalent iniquities, and greatly helped to enlighten the public mind as to the insidious evils and the means necessary to combat them. The outcome, in many cases, was the passage of remedial laws numerous of which have had permanent good results.

If the movement against the trusts was a failure, there were associated national movements that achieved complete success. One of these was the determination of the American people to put in operation a graduated income tax to reach the rich effectively. A second was the aim to compel informing the public as to political money contributions. A third was the direct election of United States Senators by the people.

Although bitterly opposed by the large capitalist interests, an income-tax bill had been passed by Congress in 1894. On five previous occasions the Supreme Court of the United States had declared such a tax constitutional. But this time lawyers representing powerful interests opposed the law, and the Supreme Court of the United States in 1895, by a bare majority of one, declared it invalid in that it contravened the Constitution.

The debates in Congress before that law was passed show that its purpose was not unreasonable class legislation but to equalize taxation and compel the millionaire to contribute his due share to the support of the Government. The point of view repeatedly expressed in the House of Representatives was that no man could accumulate a million dollars in a lifetime by honest and legitimate pursuits, and that the taxing power should be used to make him yield an amount in taxation proportionate to his income. As the facts stood, these speakers said, the poor and the unfortunate bore the burden of taxation. Some members of Congress went further, declaring that if they had their way they would make the man who owned two million dollars give up one million to keep the other million.

The movement for an amendment to the Federal Constitution authorizing income taxes came to a head in 1909 when Congress proposed the amendment to the States. It was ratified by a sufficient number and became Article XVI of the Constitution.

Following the lines of many State laws on the subject, a bill requiring publicity for campaign contributions was introduced in Congress in 1908 by Representative Samuel W. McCall, a leading Republican of Massachusetts. Representative Rucker of Missouri said that its purpose was to purify elections, and that the demand for such a law by the people and the press of the United States, regardless of party affiliations, was universal. "This bill," he said, "would prevent, or at least check, the accumulation of stupendous sums which have been used to corrupt the voter and control elections." Representative Sulzer declared of the bill: "The honest people of the land want it passed." He presented figures which, he said, were approximately correct, showing how national campaign funds had increased from small sums in 1860 to millions of dollars in later decades. A law had already been passed forbidding corporations to contribute to political campaign funds, but this had been evaded by means of personal contributions.

Congress passed the bill. It required publicity as to contributions made for the purpose of influencing national elections, and prohibited any candidate for Representative or Senator from directly or indirectly making promises of office or position to any person, or violating the election laws of any State, or spending more than a specified sum in nomination or election expenses.<sup>1</sup>

On the day (April 18, 1910), when the House of Representatives passed the bill, member after member rose to congratulate

---

<sup>1</sup> Not more than \$5,000 for a Representative, and not exceeding \$10,000 for a Senator. These sums did not include personal expenses such as traveling, etc.

the House upon the fact that it at last heard the voice of millions of people of all political parties. Representative Rucker related how with the accumulation of vast fortunes and the advent of colossal business corporations, the power and corrupting influence of money had been felt. "Beneficiaries of special privileges," he said, "are ever on the alert to gain additional favors through legislation and the enforcement of law." Many other Representatives spoke along the same lines.

The long-agitated movement to amend the Constitution and convert the United States Senate into a popularly elective body came to a climax in 1912. From the foundation of the Government United States Senators had been elected by State legislatures.

Established originally as an avowedly aristocratic body to "check the turbulency of the people," the United States Senate had degenerated into largely, although not wholly, a collection of millionaires, multi-millionaires or attorneys or agents of large corporate interests. For decades scandal upon scandal had arisen over the methods by which many of these men had obtained elections from State legislatures. The Senate was popularly regarded as the stronghold of plutocracy. Since 1892 various political parties had demanded the popular election of United States Senators. In referendums the people of California, Nevada and Illinois had given great majorities in favor of the change. Some States either legalized or made obligatory the holding of party primaries for choice of United States Senators.

In proposing, in 1898, an amendment to the Constitution, Representative William A. Jones of Virginia described at length the composition of the United States Senate and its containing so "many members who owe their preferment to the support of powerful corporations rather than to any great public or

party service or great ability or attainments." He thus epitomized the general view: "There is a popular belief that the Senate has degenerated into a rich man's club, or the representatives of corporate power and wealth." Representative Small of North Carolina, in a speech on April 12, 1900, related how it was a common practice for Senate Committees to hold, in cases where charges of flagrant fraud and corruption were made, that there was not enough evidence to justify action. On April 13, 1900, the House of Representatives by a vote of 244 to 15 approved proposing the amendment. By 1906 thirty-one legislatures had requested that Congress pass a resolution submitting it to the States. The proposal was constantly obstructed in the Senate.

As a body the United States Senate commanded no public esteem whatever. The legislatures of some States told it so in effect. The memorial, for instance, of the New York legislature in 1911 informed it that only by the direct election of Senators would the public confidence in the Senate and respect for it be increased. At the very time these memorials were submitted, there were charges affecting the methods of election of at least three Senators. In the case of one of these—William Lorimer, of Illinois—the testimony was so strong that the Senate was forced to declare his election invalid.

In the discussion both upon the amendment providing for direct election and on the Lorimer resolution various Senators rehashed all of the old aristocratic arguments. They said that the Senate represented stability in government, and they tried to explain away the public demand as "clamor." Senator Poindexter of the State of Washington told them that such kind of talk "does not sit well with the great American people." He informed them that mere claims to dignity and power did not confer those possessions. Senators, he said, might belittle



and discredit public opinion, but there was only one way to gain public esteem, and that was by the purging of corruption and by conduct that would secure public confidence and respect. Urging the need of the amendment, Senator Rayner of Maryland, on June 7, 1911, said: "The people are speaking everywhere. . . . We cannot disguise the fact that a peaceful revolution is taking place in the country." Senator McCumber said that "it has become a settled public conviction that the change should be made"; he declared it to have been lamentably true that corrupt means had been used to elect United States Senators. "In cases," he said, "where the contest is close between two candidates, the outright purchase of two or three votes may decide the cause in favor of the corruptor."

In the House of Representatives a large number of members advocated the amendment. Representative Rucker said: "The present method of electing Senators has made the United States Senate the home of many men of great wealth." Representative Hobson said: "In the blocking of legitimate reform no agent has been more effective than the United States Senate." Representative Foss said: "There is a widespread feeling throughout the country . . . that our United States Senators are, in some measure, subservient to trusts and corporations and not to the people." Representative Francis said: "The idea is prevalent that the great assassins of the people's liberties, known as trusts and monopolies, have taken refuge behind the United States Senate." These are an illustrative few of the large number of utterances in the House of Representatives.

The resolution proposing the amendment passed the House in 1912 by an overwhelming vote, and the Senate could not hold out against the popular demand. It was ratified by the requisite number of States, and in 1913 proclaimed as Article XVII of the Constitution.

During these years there was also an energetic movement for making the Federal judiciary more responsive to the popular feeling and aims by providing that judges should be elected instead of appointed. But this movement as well as some other movements were relegated by the all-absorbing events of the World War and the arising issues after its termination.

## EPILOGUE

NATURALLY the last chapter ends abruptly for the self-evident reason that the American people's undertaking in controlling cunning, greed and the misuse of economic power is in an uncompleted state. It is the province of history to tell what has been done but not to attempt forecasting what probably may or will be done. Yet no one seeing the long roll of America's accomplishments as recorded in this history can doubt for a moment that the American people, having begun a task, will ever relinquish it until it is brought to a satisfactory consummation. This book abounds with evidences that it is the American nature not to be content with compromising or half-way performances but to proceed in a true thoroughbred style toward a completed settlement. Just as the American people have solved other great questions without impairing their own individuality, so undoubtedly will they find for difficult economic problems a solution which will be in harmony with the unconquerable American individual spirit. In other words, the remedy will not be borrowed by transplantation but will be natively developed, and for that very reason the process will perhaps take longer.

Reviewing the facts presented in this book, it will be seen that in many of their great idealistic accomplishments the American people took a long time, but when they did arrive at a conclusion it was effective and final so far as the main principles were concerned. For kings to issue decrees occupied as short a time as it did to alter or revoke them. But for a whole people, or the majority of it, to consider changes and convince them-

selves of their need, obviously required extended periods of discussion.

After reading the unimpeachable facts related in this book, who can presume to gainsay American idealism? This formal phrase, however, is but a weak attestation of a stupendous actuality. There are some most striking facts which only an explanation can convey. One fact is that because of a long-continued assault of foreign criticisms, Americans went to the extreme of excessive diffidence. Through many a decade it was the fashion abroad to misrepresent Americans as boastful and self-assertive. To avoid even the appearance of these imputed qualities, Americans became depreciative, even apologetic. During the very times when they were setting a new standard for the world in splendid idealistic achievements, they neither said they were idealists nor did they think of themselves in that capacity.

And, moreover, entirely apart from the influence of foreign criticisms, Americans are an introspective people. They are ever looking into themselves, never complacent with what they have accomplished but ever seeking to attain more. Having done one good work after another they do not dally in smug contemplation of the righteous things that they have performed but straightway proceed to investigate and challenge remaining evils, concentrating attention upon them.

It has been this constant exploring into evils that has given superficial observers the impression that America is a hotbed of crookedness and corruption. Our very fiction writers reflect this searching, introspective spirit. Do they write books adulatory of America? For the most part, no, indeed. They seek sore spots and culpabilities, and weave their stories about them to elucidate a moral. And all whom it may concern please note that these are often the works of fiction that are most eagerly and widely read by the American people. They want to know



the worst in order to prepare for supplanting it by the best. This is all part of the instinctive scheme of American idealism and one of the ways by which it operates.

Has history any surprises? We all have endlessly heard the formula that "history repeats itself." In one great respect America may fairly claim to have thrown that ancient aphorism to the winds. There have been in the annals of history occasional appearances of great religious, moral and idealistic leaders. But where in all history is to be found the precedent of a people idealistic and to such a preponderant degree that the nominal leaders simply expressed what the people themselves felt and thought? As an idealistic nation America has proved that, after all, history is still in an incipient stage. The American people have provided the surprise of ages in writing an unprecedented species of history and they will write more. The most lavish dreamer cannot vision the future possibilities embedded in this invincible idealism.

THE END









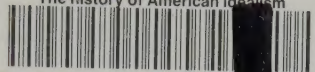




WHITMAN COLLEGE LIBRARY

E169.1.M98

The history of American idealism



3 5916 00186 5 3

E  
169  
.1  
.M98

69313



P9-DXE-308

